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To: The Chair and Members  
of the Farms Estate  
Committee

County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX2 4QD

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Date: 10 November 2023

Contact: Wendy Simpson, 01392 384383

Email: [wendy.simpson@devon.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.simpson@devon.gov.uk)

**FARMS ESTATE COMMITTEE**

Monday, 20th November, 2023

A meeting of the Farms Estate Committee is to be held on the above date at 2.15 pm at Committee Suite, County Hall to consider the following matters.

Donna Manson  
Chief Executive

**A G E N D A**

**PART I - OPEN COMMITTEE**

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 (previously circulated).

3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

**MATTERS FOR DECISION**

4 Revenue Monitoring (Month 7) 2023/24 (Pages 1 - 6)

Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DF/23/105), attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

5 Capital Monitoring (Month 7) 2023/24 (Pages 7 - 12)

Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value (DF/23/106), attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

6 Management and Restructuring Issues (Pages 13 - 24)

Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services (BSS/23/10), attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): Bovey Rural; Braunton Rural; Dawlish; Otter Valley; South Brent & Yealmpton; South Molton*

7 Results of Tenants' Questionnaire 2023 (Pages 25 - 72)

Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services (BSS/23/11), attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

8 Mental Health Strategy (Pages 73 - 124)

Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services (BSS/23/12), attached.

*Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions*

**PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

None

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**Induction Loop available**



DF/23/105  
Farms Estate Committee  
20 November 2023

## **The County Farms Estate Revenue Monitoring (month 7) 2023/24**

Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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### **1) Recommendation**

That the Committee endorses this report.

### **2) Background / Introduction**

- 2.1 The County Farms Estate is wholly self-funded with operational costs paid for through rents and other income streams generated. Each year a substantial revenue surplus is delivered to support expenditure elsewhere in the County Council and cover the cost of centralised overheads. The County Farms Estate has consistently delivered a revenue surplus since at least 1992.
- 2.2 The Revenue Budget presented to Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2023 and approved at County Council on 16 February 2023 included a target surplus of £534,000 for the County Farms Estate.
- 2.3 Appendix A provides details of income and expenditure to date.

### **3) Revenue Monitoring for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 October 2023 (month 7).**

- 3.1 £681,805 of income has either been invoiced or received at year to date. Invoices for the majority of the remaining income will be raised on 25 March 2024. Forecasts indicate that income is expected to be approximately £96,000 higher than budget.
- 3.2 Some Tenant Right Valuation (TRV) accruals have been released but £112,853 of TRV accruals are still not capable of being released as several end of tenancy valuations are not yet concluded. With the further changes of tenancy due at 25 March 2024 it is anticipated that this year's £21,000 budget will be over committed. The current forecast estimates a year end liability of £68,000.
- 3.3 £15,629 worth of unforeseen repair works has been ordered and paid in 2023/24. In addition, a further £16,026 of unforeseen works has been ordered but not invoiced. Total unforeseen maintenance expenditure and commitment at month 7 is therefore £31,655.

# Agenda Item 4

- 3.4 The revenue funded maintenance programme is showing expenditure of £141,297 at month 7. In addition, a further £20,254 of programme works has been ordered but not invoiced. Total maintenance programme expenditure and commitment at month 7 is therefore £161,551. The current forecast estimates a year end liability of £279,000.
- 3.5 There has been no spend against the redundant buildings, asbestos removal and health and safety improvements works budget to date. An accrual of £11,122 for works carried out but not invoiced in the previous financial year remains outstanding. Contractors are still being pressed to present invoices to clear these accruals as quickly as possible. The current forecast estimates a year end liability of £63,000.
- 3.6 Spend on testing and inspection works (service term contracts for private water supplies, boilers, fixed wiring systems, sewage treatment plants, radon fans etc) is showing a spend of £7,361. There are further orders raised for the total sum of £14,047 producing a total expenditure and commitment liability at month 7 of £21,408. The current forecast estimates a year end liability of £21,000.
- 3.7 The programmed tree survey work has a budget of £13,000 with the expectation that this will be fully spent by year end. Annual tree surveys have commenced on the Estate and some remedial works procured. So far £5,925 has been spent on surveys and remedial works.
- 3.8 It is anticipated the building maintenance survey budget of £10,000 will be fully committed. The survey programme is behind schedule due to surveyors being redeployed to inspect property for Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC).
- 3.9 On the understanding the revenue funded repair and maintenance programme will be carried out as expected, the South West Norse fees are expected to be slightly higher than the £236,000 budgeted due largely to increase in maintenance spend. This has yet to be reflected in the forecast although it is expected that underspends across other budgets will compensate for this. At month 7 the South West Norse fees are £128,078.
- 3.10 It is currently anticipated that the forecast year end level of income and expenditure will be achieved, and the target surplus delivered, albeit there may be some further fluctuations within income and expenditure items.

## **4) Options / Alternatives**

- 4.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

## **5) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data**

- 5.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.
- 5.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received
- 5.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

## **6) Strategic Plan**

- 6.1 This report has no specific direct alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

## **7) Financial Considerations**

- 7.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

## **8) Legal Considerations**

- 8.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

## **9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)**

- 9.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.

## **10) Equality Considerations**

- 10.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

## **11) Risk Management Considerations**

- 11.1 No risks have been identified.

## **12) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations**

- 12.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Angie Sinclair,  
Director of Finance and Public Value

# Agenda Item 4

**Electoral Divisions:** All

## **Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers**

Background Paper

Date

File Reference

Nil

### **Contact for enquiries:**

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Name: Lisa Beynon, Head Accountant for Corporate Services, Finance and Public Value, County Hall, Exeter

Contact: 01392 382876 or [lisa.beynon@devon.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.beynon@devon.gov.uk)



## COUNTY FARMS ESTATE - FINANCIAL REPORTS FINANCIAL STATEMENT - (MONTH 7) 2023-24

| <u>INCOME</u>  | <u>YEAR<br/>TO DATE</u><br>£'000                                  | <u>ANNUAL<br/>TARGET</u><br>£'000                                 | <u>CURRENT<br/>FORECAST</u><br>£'000                              |
|--|---|---|---|
| Rent   | (659)   | (1,213)   | (1,324)   |
| Other  | (22)  | (40)  | (25)  |
| TOTAL INCOME   | <u>(681)</u>  | <u>(1,253)</u>  | <u>(1,349)</u>  |
| <br>   |   |   |   |
| <u>EXPENDITURE</u>   |   |   |   |
| <u>STATUTORY COSTS</u>   |   |   |   |
| Tenant Right Valuation   | (113)   | 21  | 68  |
| SUB - TOTAL  | <u>(113)</u>  | <u>21</u>   | <u>68</u>   |
| <br>   |   |   |   |
| <u>PREMISES COSTS</u>  |   |   |   |
| Building Maintenance - unforeseen  | 16  | 103   | 103   |
| Building Maintenance - programmed  | 141   | 216   | 279   |
| Building Maintenance - Surveys   | 0   | 10  | 10  |
| Building Maintenance - STC   | 7   | 21  | 21  |
| Building Maintenance - other (incl. land agents initiatives,<br>redundant buildings, asbestos and health & safety) | (11)  | 63  | 63  |
| Grounds Maintenance  | 6   | 13  | 13  |
| Rents & other landlord charges   | 6   | 11  | 11  |
| Rates, Electricity and Water Charges   | 5   | 6   | 6   |
| SUB - TOTAL  | <u>170</u>  | <u>443</u>  | <u>506</u>  |
| <br>   |   |   |   |
| <u>SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</u>   |   |   |   |
| Insurance  | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Adverts  | 0   | 2   | 0   |
| South West Norse Fees  | 128   | 236   | 236   |
| Legal Fees   | (5)   | 4   | 4   |
| Professional Fees  | (18)  | 6   | 6   |
| Other Fees & Charges   | (5)   | 7   | (5)   |
| SUB - TOTAL  | <u>100</u>  | <u>255</u>  | <u>241</u>  |
| <br>   |   |   |   |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>   | <b><u>157</u></b>   | <b><u>719</u></b>   | <b><u>815</u></b>   |
| <br>   |   |   |   |
| <b>NET OPERATIONAL (SURPLUS)</b>   | <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">(524)</span> | <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">(534)</span> | <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">(534)</span> |
| <br>   |   |   |   |
| <b>TOTAL COSTS SURPLUS</b>   | <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">(524)</span> | <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">(534)</span> | <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">(534)</span> |



DF/23/106  
Farms Estate Committee  
20 November 2023

## **The County Farms Estate Capital Monitoring (month 7) 2023/24**

Report of the Director of Finance and Public Value

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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### **1) Recommendation**

That the Committee endorses this report.

### **2) Background / Introduction**

- 2.1 Each year the County Farms Estate generates significant capital receipts from the sale of surplus assets associated with an approved restructuring or rationalisation programme and through the sale of high value development opportunities.
- 2.2 The Estate bids for Capital for essential inward investment to maintain and improve critical infrastructure. Capital is bid for in competition with other front-line services.
- 2.3 The following table shows the current five-year capital allocation for the County Farms Estate.

| Year            | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | Total |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
|                 | £'000   | £'000   | £'000   | £'000   | £'000   | £'000 |
| Current Capital | 750     | 450     | 450     | 450     | 0       | 2100  |

### **3) Capital Monitoring for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 October 2023 (month 7).**

- 3.1 The Capital budget presented to Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2023 and approved at County Council on 16 February 2023 included schemes totalling £750,000.
- 3.2 There was an 'underspend' of £31,018 in 2022/23 and an in year receipt of £120,000 thus the balance of capital available to spend in 2023/24 amounts to £901,017.

# Agenda Item 5

- 3.3 As at month 7 very little has been spent but over half the budget is now committed and forecast to be spent by year end. Due to practical challenges experienced there will be some delays in delivering some projects which is likely to result in a year end underspend against overall budget. Some capital is likely to be carried forward to next year's budget.

## **4) Nitrate Vulnerable Zone Compliance**

- 4.1 Retention monies are left to pay on only one slurry store constructed in the previous financial years. No new slurry store schemes were progressed this financial year.
- 4.2 Forecast spend stands at £2,445 on retention monies associated with NVZ compliant schemes in 2023/24.
- 4.3 It is noted that Local Authorities appear to be no longer expressly excluded from the DEFRA Slurry Infrastructure Grant (Round 2). Furthermore, the grant now allows applications to be made for slurry store covers and a greater proportion of Devon has been included in the DEFRA priority areas. The Land Agents are currently preparing a business case for making applications for the Slurry Infrastructure Grant to draw down, on a priority area basis, grants to cover existing slurry stores to be procured by either landlord or tenant.

## **5) Enhancements and Improvements**

- 5.1 The 2023/24 programme consists of:
- (a) 13 projects that were started in previous years which are now in defect periods.
  - (b) 1 projects started last financial year and is still being delivered on site.
  - (c) 2 new whole house refurbishment projects have started on site and should be complete this financial year.
  - (d) 10 further sewage treatment plants are due to be installed by year end.
  - (e) 1 new silage clamp is being designed to replace a failed landlords clamp but construction wont start on site this financial year.
  - (f) 1 jointly funded methane harvesting slurry store cover is being procured in partnership with a third party contractor but the majority of the cost wont be incurred this financial year.
- 5.2 Two tenants are currently occupying static caravans as temporary accommodation whilst farmhouses are being improved. The third static caravan is being moved to a new farm ready for occupation from April 2024 whilst a further substantial farmhouse improvement project is being delivered.
- 5.3 Additional improvement projects are in the process of being programmed that may be capable of being delivered before the financial year end and as part of next year's capital programme but the logistics of making major improvements to farmhouses whilst occupied by tenants is beginning to frustrate the pace of delivery.
- 5.4 Actual spend at month 7 is now £41,303 due to outstanding 2022/23 year end creditor adjustments with a further £473,954 committed (orders placed) to date.

## 6) Compensation Payments (Tenants Improvements, etc.)

- 6.1 It is now highly likely that some of the capital budget will need to be spent on end of tenancy compensation liabilities arising at 25 March 2024. The end of tenancy valuations will be negotiated in the next 6 months.

## 7) Land Acquisitions

- 7.1 One acquisition of 18.21 acres of land at High Bickington has now completed and the land has been let to a nearby Estate tenant.

## 8) Capital Receipts Generated in year

- 8.1 At the County Farms Estate Committee meeting of 26 September 2022, members requested an update at all future meetings of all capital receipts completed in year to date.
- 8.2 The table below schedules all County Farms Estate disposals that have completed in year to date and will contribute towards the Corporate Capital Programme.

| Asset Sold                                  | Acreage Sold | Capital Receipt (net of costs) | Date of completion |
|---|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Field at Lower Northchurch Farm, Yarnscombe | 3.93         | £ 69,104                       | 21 June 2023       |

## 9) Options / Alternatives

- 9.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

## 10) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data

- 10.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.
- 10.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received.
- 10.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

# Agenda Item 5

## 11) Strategic Plan

- 11.1 This report has no specific direct alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

## 12) Financial Considerations

- 12.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

## 13) Legal Considerations

- 13.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

## 14) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

- 14.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.

## 15) Equality Considerations

- 15.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

## 16) Risk Management Considerations

- 16.1 No risks have been identified.

## 17) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations

- 17.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Angie Sinclair,  
Director of Finance and Public Value

**Electoral Divisions:** All

### **Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers**

Background Paper

Date

File Reference

**Contact for enquiries:**

# Agenda Item 5

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Name: Lisa Beynon, Head Accountant for Corporate Services, Finance and Public Value, County Hall, Exeter  
Contact: 01392 382876 or [lisa.beynon@devon.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.beynon@devon.gov.uk)





BSS/23/10  
Farms Estate Committee  
20 November 2023

## **The County Farms Estate Management and Restructuring**

Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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### **1) Recommendation**

That the Committee approves the recommendations as set out in the opening paragraphs of sections 3.1 to 3.6 of this report.

### **2) Background / Introduction**

Decisions to declare any asset surplus to the requirements of the Estate in advance of disposal must be approved by the County Farms Estate Committee. All or any estate rationalisation or restructuring proposals must also be approved by the Committee. Proposals to let or continue to let all or any part of the Estate to any tenants and for how long need to be approved by the Committee. The appointment of new tenants either from the open market (starter farms) or internally (progression farms) are delegated to an Interview Panel Sub-Committee convened to meet as and when required.

### **3) Proposals to sell, let or restructure the Estate**

#### 3.1 Part Glebe Farm, Rattery

##### 3.1.1 It is recommended that:

1.53 acres or thereabouts of land forming part Glebe Farm, Rattery and more particularly described as pt NG 2244 and pt NG 2854 be let to the Parish Council for community use only on a security of tenure excluded common law tenancy for a term commencing 25 March 2024 and terminating 25 March 2039, subject to terms being agreed.

##### 3.1.2 The Rattery Estate comprises:

|            |                |               |
|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Glebe Farm | 19.21 hectares | (47.45 acres) |
| Total      | 19.21 hectares | (47.45 acres) |

# Agenda Item 6

3.1.3 The former farmhouse at Glebe Farm, Rattery was sold several years ago. The farm buildings and land extending to 19.21 hectares (47.45 acres) or thereabouts was retained for its mid to long term development potential on part, and as useful 'away' land for one of the Estates nearby retained dairy holdings (Cobberton Farm, Dartington).

3.1.4 The tenant of Cobberton Farm, Dartington has farmed the land at Glebe Farm, Rattery on a series of 12 month Farm Business Tenancy Agreements since 2013.

3.1.5 Members may recall considered report BSS/22/10 on 16 May 2022 and resolving under minute ref: FE37/(c) Part Glebe Farm, Rattery:

- (i) *Part NG 2249 (0.38 acres or thereabouts) be declared permanently surplus to the operational requirements of the Estate and transferred to St Mary's Church, Rattery, subject to terms being agreed.*
- (ii) *Permission be given to discuss and agree terms with the Parish Council for a permissive path agreement granting rights for the Parish Council to create and thereafter maintain and repair a permissive path through Part NG 2249 and NG 2854.*

3.1.6 Discussions with representatives of St Mary's Church regarding the subject to contract transfer of Part NG 2249 were not fruitful and the transfer will not now progress. The Parish Council has however expressed interest in renting this land together with a much larger area of land referred to below.

3.1.7 The Parish Council has expressed interest in renting from the County Council approximately 1.53 acres of land comprising pt NG 2244 and pt NG 2854. This land is either existing woodland or scrubby, bracken covered farmland that would be considered 'waste' in an agricultural tenancy.

3.1.8 The Parish Council wish to use this land to:

- Create permissive access
- Plant trees on part
- Create open recreational space
- Actively manage the existing woodland

3.2 Southacott Farm, Mariansleigh

3.2.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) The tenants early surrender of Southacott Farm, Mariansleigh be accepted.
- (ii) Southacott Farm, Mariansleigh be advertised to let internally amongst existing tenants as a dairy progression opportunity and on a Farm Business Tenancy for a term of up to 20 years commencing 25 March 2024 and terminating 25 March 2044, all subject to terms being agreed.
- (iii) Part Southacott Farm, extending to 15.49 acres or thereabouts and comprising existing woodland and steep 'waste' ground suitable for woodland

# Agenda Item 6

restoration and additional woodland planting respectively, be retained in hand and utilised by the County Council for environmental enhancement initiatives.

## 3.2.2 The Mariansleigh Estate comprises:

|       |                             |                                |
|-------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (i)   | Southacott Farm             | 81.67 hectares (201.18 acres)  |
| (ii)  | Woodland at Southacott Farm | 5.99 hectares (15.49 acres)    |
| (iii) | Lower Uppacott Farm         | 34.56 hectares (85.54 acres)   |
|       | Total                       | 122.22 hectares (302.21 acres) |

3.2.3 Southacott Farm, Mariansleigh was relet as a dairy progression farm from as recently as 25 March 2022.

3.2.4 For personal reasons the current tenant has asked if he can surrender his Farm Business Tenancy early, and so that he can pursue an alternative farming opportunity in Gloucestershire.

3.2.5 It is proposed that an area of existing and proposed woodland planting is not relet with Southacott Farm and instead, held in hand for internal occupation and use. The existing woodland is being considered by the County Council as a suitable site for woodland restoration required to achieve part of the Biodiversity Net Gain obligations associated with the improvements to the North Devon Link Road. The adjacent areas of steep and partly scrub covered ground has been identified as a potential site for additional tree planting as part of the Councils Emergency Tree Fund Project and for which a Woodland Trust 'MoreWoods' grant has been secured to cover the majority of the cost of fencing, and provision and planting of trees and shrubs.

## 3.3 Thorne Farm, Ottery St Mary

### 3.3.1 It is recommended that:

The existing lease granted to the Ottery St Mary Town Council be amended by way of a Deed of Variation to extend the leased area by approximately 100m<sup>2</sup> in order to facilitate an alternative access route to the skate park through the Kings School campus, subject to terms being agreed.

### 3.3.2 The Ottery Estate comprises:

|       |                             |                              |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| (i)   | Thorne Farm (bare land)     | 10.33 hectares (25.41 acres) |
| (ii)  | Airport Outer Marker Beacon | 0.20 hectares (0.56 acres)   |
| (iii) | Skate Park                  | 0.20 hectares (0.50 acres)   |
|       | Total                       | 10.73 hectares (26.47 acres) |

3.3.3 At the County Farms Estate Committee meeting of 30 July 2009 members resolved under minute ref: FE/9(b) Land at Thorne Farm, Ottery St Mary:

# Agenda Item 6

*‘That in principle and subject to contract, the County Council let to the Ottery St Mary Town Council or East Devon District Council part OS 6230 (extending to 0.56 acres or thereabouts) on a Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 lease excluding security of tenure for a term of 20 years commencing 25 March 2010 and terminating 25 March 2030 for the sole purpose of providing a community BMX/Skate Park’.*

3.3.4 Access to the skate park is via a right of way over part of the Kings School Campus. It is understood that the use of the right of way over the last 13 years has raised safeguarding and safety issues and the school has sought to negotiate an alternative route through the campus. The alternative route requires the County Council to let the Town Council a further strip of land measuring approximately 50m long by 2m wide to extend the existing access path through the Councils field.

3.4 Middle Winsham Farm, Braunton

3.4.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) The tenants proposed early surrender of Middle Winsham Farm, Braunton be accepted.
- (ii) Middle Winsham Farm, Braunton be advertised to let on the open market as a new entrant opportunity and on a Farm Business Tenancy for a term of seven years commencing 25 March 2024 (or as soon as practically possible thereafter) and terminating 25 March 2031, all subject to terms being agreed.

3.4.2 The Braunton Estate comprises:

|      |                          |                               |
|------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (i)  | Middle Winsham Farm      | 40.21 hectares (99.37 acres)  |
| (ii) | Part Middle Winsham Farm | 50.03 hectares (123.63 acres) |
|      | Total                    | 90.24 acres (223.00 acres)    |

3.4.3 The tenant of Middle Winsham Farm, Braunton has asked if he can surrender his lease of the holding and vacate at the earliest possible opportunity.

3.4.4 If the early surrender is to be accepted the farm will need to be relet on the open market and occupied as quickly as is practically possible.

3.5 Mixing Barn Farm, Bovey Tracey

3.5.1 It is recommended that:

Mixing Barn Farm, Bovey Tracey be advertised to let on the open market as a new entrant opportunity and on a Farm Business Tenancy for a term of seven years commencing 25 March 2025 and terminating 25 March 2032, all subject to terms being agreed.

## 3.5.2 The Bovey Tracey Estate comprises:

|      |                  |                               |
|------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| (i)  | Mixing Barn Farm | 39.08 hectares (96.56 acres)  |
| (ii) | Moorhouse Farm   | 39.21 hectares (96.90 acres)  |
|      | Total            | 78.29 hectares (193.46 acres) |

## 3.5.3 At the County Farms Estate Committee meeting of 15 September 2016 members resolved under minute ref: FE/27(a)(v):

*'that the tenant of Mixing Barn Farm, Bovey Tracey be offered a second but final seven year Farm Business Tenancy of the holding for a term commencing 25 March 2018 and terminating 25 March 2025, subject to terms being agreed'.*

## 3.5.4 It is with great pleasure that we are able to report the tenant has made arrangements to successfully progress beyond the Estate before or on 25 March 2025. The holding therefore needs to be advertised to let on the open market as a starter farm at some point during 2024.

## 3.6 Manor Farm, Holcombe

### 3.6.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) Manor Farm, Holcombe be advertised to let on the open market as a new entrant opportunity and on a Farm Business Tenancy for a term of seven years commencing 25 March 2025 and terminating 25 March 2032, all subject to terms being agreed.
- (ii) The 1954 Landlord and Tenant Act security of tenure excluded lease of part NG 0392 comprising part of the farmyard and former parlour and dairy buildings be renewed for a further fixed term of seven years commencing 25 March 2025 and terminating 25 March 2032, subject to terms being agreed.
- (iii) That before the request from the ACTION on Climate in Teignbridge CIC to occupy land off Hall Lane, Holcombe to create a Community Wildlife Area is considered, members and officers of the County Council attend a site visit to inspect the land.

### 3.6.2 The Holcombe Estate comprises:

|       |                 |                               |
|-------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| (i)   | Manor Farm      | 49.65 hectares (122.32 acres) |
| (ii)  | Part Manor Farm | 1.80 hectares (4.46 acres)    |
| (iii) | Part Manor Farm | 0.04 hectares (0.10 acres)    |
| (iv)  | Part Manor Farm | 1.05 hectares (2.60 acres)    |
| (v)   | Part Manor Farm | 0.43 hectares (1.08 acres)    |
|       | Total           | 52.97 hectares (130.56 acres) |

### 3.6.3 Manor Farm comprising the house, cottage, buildings and 122.32 acres or thereabouts of land (i above) is let to an agricultural tenant on a starter farm tenancy together with ancillary or supplemental short term management agreements. The

# Agenda Item 6

same tenant is let the bare land referred to in (ii above). All agreements expire 25 March 2025.

3.6.4 Part Manor Farm comprising buildings and yards of approximately 0.10 acres in size (iii above) is let to a small commercial business premises occupier under a 1954 Landlord and Tenant Act security of tenure excluded lease. That lease also expires 25 March 2025.

3.6.5 Part Manor Farm (iv above) extending to approximately 2.60 acres of bare land is currently held in hand and sold subject to contract and planning for residential development.

3.6.6 Part Manor Farm (v above) is let on a series of annual common law tenancy agreements to a local resident for domestic fruit and vegetable growing.

3.6.6 At the County Farms Estate Committee meeting of 11 September 2023 members considered report BSS/23/09 and resolved under minute ref: FE99(b)(e):

*'the tenant of Manor Farm, Dawlish be informed he is required to produce a new business plan supported by cashflows and budgets and be interviewed before the County Farms Estate Committee at its next meeting to be held 20 November 2023 before a decision can be made as to whether or not he be offered a second and final seven-year Farm Business Tenancy of the holding.'*

3.6.7 The tenant was subsequently invited to put together the requisite business plan and to present it to this meeting. The tenant declined the invitation and has since confirmed he intends to vacate the holding at 25 March 2025. Manor Farm thus needs to be advertised to let on the open market as a starter farm at some point during 2024.

3.6.8 The commercial tenant referred to in 3.6.4 above has occupied part of the former farmyards and former parlour and dairy building to operate a microbrewery over the last 5.5 years. We understand the brewery tenant has caused no nuisance or concerns for the farm tenant despite being located in such close proximity to the farmhouse and holiday letting cottage. The brewery tenant has requested his tenancy be renewed.

3.6.9 The County Council has been approached by the ACTion on Climate in Teignbridge CIC to occupy and transform an area of the farm into a Community Wildlife Area.

3.6.10 The CIC has produced a one-page flier (Appendix 1) and wish to create:

- An unsurfaced path looping around the site, giving the public access whilst limiting disturbance to wildlife.
- a small education area with seating - both the surface and stones for the seating have been offered to them.
- Benches.
- a traditional bund.
- A community wildflower garden with agroforestry trees

- Information boards about local wildlife and other signage to promote education and appropriate access. Including all the non-native species that have found a home there.
- Encouraging and developing a mosaic of habitats including hedges, and wet woodland (already growing there).
- Installation of reptile hibernaculum, bird and bat boxes to encourage colonisation.
- Managing the Streamside habitat to promote well balanced and diverse populations of flora and fauna; possibly with the inclusion of a lined pond.
- Ensure that this trail meets the needs of less mobile people.
- Promote wellbeing - with quiet areas, and sensory areas.
- Potential training area for local wildlife wardens/nature groups to practice bioblitz recordings - revealing and tracking the diverse insect and plant life already living on the site.

3.6.11 The land in question was put forward for residential development as part of the District Councils call for sites as part of a larger parcel of land in 2021. The District Council considered the sites suitability under the Part 3 consultation process of the Draft Local Plan 2020 to 2040 which ran for 10 weeks between 15 November 2021 and 24 January 2022. The site was not included in the emerging Local Plan by the District Council on this occasion but that does not necessarily mean the land is not capable of being developed at some point in the future. The particular area of land in question is considered strategically important as it is one option for creating suitable access off the public highway.

3.6.12 Before any alternative land use is considered in this area it is suggested members and officers ought to undertake a site visit.

## **4) Options / Alternatives**

4.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

## **5) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data**

5.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.

5.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received

5.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

## **6) Strategic Plan**

6.1 This report has no specific direct alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

# Agenda Item 6

## 7) Financial Considerations

7.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

## 8) Legal Considerations

8.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

## 9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

9.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.

## 10) Equality Considerations

10.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

## 11) Risk Management Considerations

11.1 No risks have been identified.

## 12) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations

12.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Matthew Jones,  
Director of Transformation and Business Services

**Electoral Divisions:** South Brent & Yealmpton; South Molton; Otter Valley;  
Braunton Rural; Bovey Rural; Dawlish

## Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper  
Date  
File Reference

Nil



# Agenda Item 6

**Contact for enquiries:**

Name: Dan Meek, Director of Estates & Valuation, South West Norse, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW

Contact: 01392 351066 or [dan.meek@norsegroup.co.uk](mailto:dan.meek@norsegroup.co.uk)



# The Hall Lane Community Wildlife Area Project

A wildlife corridor for Holcombe on land off  
Hall Lane, Dawlish, EX7 0JP



The Action Climate Teignbridge Wildlife Wardens of Dawlish working together with local Councillors and members of the public are wanting to turn an unused area of unused Devon County Council farmland with wet woodland and a watercourse in it into a new wildlife area to increase nature/biodiversity.

This scheme goes before the the Farms Committee on 20 November 2023.

## BRIEF SUMMARY:

The area, owned by Devon County Council Estates, has not been used for farming and has been unused scrub for some considerable time. The area is prone to freshwater flooding and is a rare wet woodland area - which we would like to enhance, adding a wildflower meadow, community education area, storage for maintenance tools/kettle, and agroforestry area - offering nuts and fruit for the community. There are lots of initiatives now currently seeking to encourage the planting of wildflowers to help combat climate change, help wildlife and pollinators and transform our own wellbeing, we feel this area could easily become with a little work an area the local community could be proud of.



It's land which has previously been used as a dumping area of unsifted building waste, and as TDC's Historical drainage records show with the SWW combined sewers under the site - a sizeable volume of water travels under it.

Whenever there are heavy rains in the area it floods (demonstrating the area is unsuitable for housing) and flooded spectacularly in the rains a few weeks ago. The flooding is perfect for what we would like to do with it - we want to highlight the benefit of this feature for wildlife, expanding the wet woodland area it has currently, and highlighting the biodiverse landscape already on the site, hidden under our noses.

On site after one of Dawlish's infamous recent downpours, around standing water there were recorded tracks, droppings, and evidence of various wildlife using the area. We would like to position a motion sensor wildlife camera - safely and hidden from view, to be able to monitor the wildlife using the area.

We have the volunteers, some funding, time and the materials, to quickly develop the area and realise our proposal should the project be green lit by the local community, and have a questionnaire ready to go to gauge the support of the residents, which we feel would be a great asset to DCC as it would be both a carbon sink, and a wild habitat, a haven for wildlife, and provide a wild corridor for existing wildlife.



## Flood risk

## The vision

It is envisioned that a Community Wildlife Area, could it be created here, and might include the following:

- An unsurfaced path looping around the site, giving the public access whilst limiting disturbance to wildlife.
- a small education area with seating - both the surface and stones for the seating have been offered to us.
- Benches.
- a traditional bund.
- A community wildflower garden with agroforestry trees
- Information boards about local wildlife and other signage to promote education and appropriate access. Including all the non native species that have found a home there.
- Encouraging and developing a mosaic of habitats including hedges, and wet woodland (already growing there).
- Installation of reptile hibernaculum, bird and bat boxes to encourage colonisation.
- Managing the Streamside habitat to promote well balanced and diverse populations of flora and fauna
- The inclusion of a lined pond to help manage flooding area.
- Ensure that this trail meets the needs of less mobile people.
- Promote wellbeing - with quiet areas, and sensory areas.
- Potential training area for local wildlife wardens/nature groups to produce bioblitz recordings - revealing and tracking the diverse insect and plant life already interacting with the site.



## More info:

For copies of the public consultation leaflet, which Holcombe Residents reacted to well at a recent Residents Association Meeting (with 223 households as members). To learn more about the project please contact: Scott Williams, ACT Wildlife Warden, 8 Millin Way, Dawlish Warren, EX7 0EP email: [scott.dawlishww@gmail.com](mailto:scott.dawlishww@gmail.com) phone: 07751214656

Cllr Alison Foden (Dawlish South West) has set up an online petition - the petition address is: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/protect-nature-now-a-community-wildlife-area-for-holcombe>



## The Plan

Featuring a diverse landscape: Wet woodland, enhanced habitat, agroforestry orchard for of nuts/fruits - including figs and walnuts, wildflower meadow, a bund, wild herbs and borage for pollinators, bat boxes, hibernaculum, wood piles, and bat boxes. Providing a continuation of wildlife access to the biodiverse rich community orchard.

## Why is this important?

We all know that we are facing a Nature and Climate emergency, and with the news that the UK is one of the most nature-deprived countries in the world, it is even more urgent that we make and protect space for wildlife in our local communities. Let's campaign with Action on Climate in Teignbridge (ACT) to create a space for nature here in Holcombe.

The area is prone to freshwater flooding and is a rare wet woodland area - which we would like to enhance, adding a wildflower meadow, provide an example of a community education area, potentially include storage for maintenance, and an agroforestry area - offering nuts and fruit for the community.

There are lots of initiatives now currently seeking to encourage the planting of wildflowers to help combat climate change, help wildlife and pollinators and to transform our own wellbeing.

We feel this area could easily become, with a little work, a wildlife area the local community could really be proud about.

I've made contact with the local tenant/farmer, Jack - and he did point out that it floods, which would be perfect to develop the habitat we want to promote - and recently his sheep were grazing on it.

Something we would have no issue with continuing to happen to help with a biodiverse natural management. Grazing, along with agroforestry is part of the ecology we want to showcase. The project would be an asset in terms of nature preservation, and education.





BSS/23/11  
Farms Estate Committee  
20 November 2023

## **The County Farms Estate Results of Tenants Questionnaire 2023**

Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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### **1) Recommendation**

That:

- (a) The actions reported by the land agents to improve traceability of repairs and maintenance requests made by tenants be noted.
- (b) The proposal to report the questionnaire results and proposed actions to improve traceability of repairs and maintenance requests made by tenants in the Estate Winter Newsletter be endorsed.
- (c) The feedback confirming members beliefs that Norse require more funding to employ additional qualified Land Agent resource be explored at the earliest opportunity with officers of the County Council.

### **2) Background / Introduction**

- 2.1 Between May and June 2023 an anonymous questionnaire was sent to 70 Devon County Farms Estate Tenants in order to garner feedback on their experiences.
- 2.2 A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report at Appendix 1. A summary of the questionnaire feedback is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 Overall, participation was very low with just 26% (18) of tenants responding to the survey.
- 2.4 In the main, the feedback was positive with just two notable areas that warranted further investigation and potential improvement. The two specific areas were:
  - (i) The perceived slow response rate for either South West Norse building surveyors and/or Devon County Council contractors to attend to both programmed and unforeseen repairs and maintenance. Linked to this feedback was an apparent lack of regular communication from building surveyors and contractors around the requisite repairs.
  - (ii) Tenants being unclear on how to and who to communicate compliments or complaints.

# Agenda Item 7

- 2.5 Some feedback suggested a greater need to improve support for new tenants. It was surprising some tenants didn't rate particularly highly the new entrants guide. The guide attached at Appendix 3 is believed to be relatively unique in the UK farm tenanted sector and we would like to understand what more tenants may wish to see in the guide.
- 2.6 It should also be recognised that despite best endeavours and best intentions some of the comments and observations made in the questionnaire feedback can simply not be resolved for practical, and at times, legal reasons. An example of this would be the comment made in responds to question 1 *'to ascertain the ingoing valuation, to ensure the incoming tenant can afford this commitment from the outset'*. Whilst every effort is made to negotiate, agree and report before viewing days an upfront valuation of an outgoing tenants' improvements, fixtures and fittings, this process is sometimes frustrated by an outgoing tenant and/or their agent. It should also be noted that there will always be other ingoing costs an incomer will be liable for such as the value of tenants' pastures, back fencing and fertility that cannot be determined until the tenancy changeover date.
- 2.7 The feedback comments to question 6 confirms Members and Land Agents belief's that additional qualified Land Agent resource is required. The level of resource has been reduced in the last 5 years, yet the workload and diversity of workload has undoubtedly increased. It is not disputed that the current resource is stretched too thin. Additional resource will require additional budget provision being made in the estate revenue account.
- 2.8 Questions 8, 9 and 10 relate to repairs and maintenance and this is where the majority of the more negative feedback arose. Some of the comments may simply relate to the fact that the Estate budget for repairs and maintenance is incredibly constrained and not helped by the recent unprecedented levels of inflationary cost increase in the construction industry meaning only the most pressing repairs can be afforded and justified. Other comments clearly relate to the quality of work carried out by Devon County Councils own contractors and in this regard, it is hoped that when the Council's Standing List of Approved Contractors (SLOAC) next opens for applications, more agriculturally focussed contractors can be encouraged and supported to join the approved list. However, some of the feedback concerns the performance of the South West Norse Ltd building surveying team. It has been agreed with the building surveying team that for Farms Estate repairs and maintenance work the Connect 2 'helpdesk' function will be used from January 2024 to log, record and track all requests made by tenants for landlord's repairs reported to the land agents. This will add an improved level of traceability and should prevent works instructions getting lost and/or delayed in email traffic.
- 2.9 It is important that for those tenants who took the time to respond to the questionnaire actions are implemented to improve the service and those actions are communicated in a timely manner. It is therefore intended to report a summary of the questionnaire results in the Estate Winter Newsletter, together with:
- (i) A statement covering the proposed intervention for service improvement referred to in 2.8 above.

- (ii) A statement on how tenants can report compliments or complaints, with the first point of contact remaining the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee, followed by utilisation of the County Councils customer feedback service [Customer feedback procedure - Have Your Say \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/customer-feedback-procedure)

## 3) Options / Alternatives

- 3.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

## 4) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data

- 4.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.
- 4.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received
- 4.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

## 5) Strategic Plan

- 5.1 This report has a direct alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

*Improving health and wellbeing - improve mental health by improving access to mental health and wellbeing services and strengthening support for young people at risk of emotional or mental health problems*

## 6) Financial Considerations

- 6.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

## 7) Legal Considerations

- 7.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

## 8) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

- 8.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.

# Agenda Item 7

## 9) Equality Considerations

9.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

## 10) Risk Management Considerations

10.1 No risks have been identified.

## 11) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations

11.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Matthew Jones,  
Director of Transformation and Business Services

**Electoral Divisions:** All

## Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

| Background Paper |
|------------------|
| Date             |
| File Reference   |

Nil

### Contact for enquiries:

Name: Dan Meek, Director of Estates & Valuation, South West Norse, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW  
Contact: 01392 351066 or [dan.meek@norsegroup.co.uk](mailto:dan.meek@norsegroup.co.uk)



## Appendix 1 – The Devon County Farms Estate Questionnaire

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1. If you have joined the Farms Estate as a new tenant within the last 12 - 18 months how would you rate the application and award process?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- n/a

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2. Please note below if you can suggest any improvements for this process

Enter your answer

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3. How would you rate the new entrants guide?

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

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4. If you have renewed, reviewed or received a new lease agreement within the last 12-18 months, was the lease agreement clear and comprehensive?

- Yes
- No
- n/a

5. Was this process clear, fair, open & transparent?

- Yes
  - No
  - n/a
- 

6. Was the lease/renewal process managed in a timely manner and did you receive regular updates/communications during the transition?

- Yes
  - No
  - n/a
- 

7. Please note any comments regarding your recent lease / lease renewal experience.

Enter your answer

8. Within the last 12 - 18 months how would you rate the level of support received (if required) from the Land Agents during this time?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- n/a

9. Please note below any comments, suggestions or improvements that could be made regarding this

Enter your answer

10. If you lease a farmhouse, how would you rate this property?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- n/a

11. Please note below any relevant comments or concerns

Enter your answer

12. If you have required any property maintenance on your farm in the last 12-18 months that is the responsibility of the landlord, did you find this easy to report?

- Yes
- No
- n/a

13. If you have required any property maintenance on your farm within the last 12-18 months that is the responsibility of the landlord, was this resolved swiftly and/or were you kept informed regarding the status of the repair?

- Yes
- No
- n/a

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14. Please note below any comments, suggestions or improvements that could be made regarding this.

Enter your answer

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15. If any property maintenance on your farm within the last 12-18 months, arranged by the landlord, how would you rate the quality of work undertaken? (where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is excellent).

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

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16. Please note below any comments, suggestions or improvements in relation to this

Enter your answer

---

17. If you read the County Farms Newsletter, please advise how useful and informative you rate this (where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is 'excellent').

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

18. If you have needed to contact the Land Agents within the last 12 months, have you been able to make contact easily?

- Yes
- No
- n/a

---

19. When contacting the Land Agents how would you rate the level of service? (where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is 'excellent').

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

20. If you felt the need to offer feedback, a compliment or a complaint - would you know how to access this process?

- Yes
- No

---

21. Finally, based on your experience over the last 12-18 months, please advise if you would recommend leasing a DCC farm to friends or family (where 1 is 'never' and 10 is 'definitely'). \*

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

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22. If you would like to discuss your responses further, please provide your contact details below.

Enter your answer



## Devon County Farms Estate Questionnaire 2023

### Executive Summary

During May – June 2023 a questionnaire was shared with 70 Devon County Farms Tenants to obtain feedback on their experience.

Participation was low with 26% of tenants responding to the survey.

Overall results were positive, however key areas for improvement/ further investigation centre on:

- The end-to-end repairs process.
- Access to offer feedback (compliment or complaint).

With potential to:

- Improve support for new tenants.
- Look into alternative contact methods to increase participation in 2024 survey.

Recommended actions are detailed later within the report and will be updated via the Farms Estate newsletter.

## **Introduction**

Through agreement with Farms Committee leads Cllr Yabsley and Cllr Brook and with consultation on content with the Farms Agents and Farms Tenant Representative, a questionnaire for tenants of the Devon County Council Farms Estate was devised (as attached in Appendix 1).

The online questionnaire was issued to 70 tenants via email (and post to tenants with no email address recorded) during early May 2023 and ran until end June 2023. Two reminders were issued via email to encourage tenants to participate in the survey. The results were anonymous with an option for further contact if required.

26% (18) responses were received online / via post. It is unclear why the response rate was low – this would be interesting to understand with tenants. It is important however to listen to the valuable feedback from those that did engage and ensure any improvements benefit all tenants across the estate.

Draft



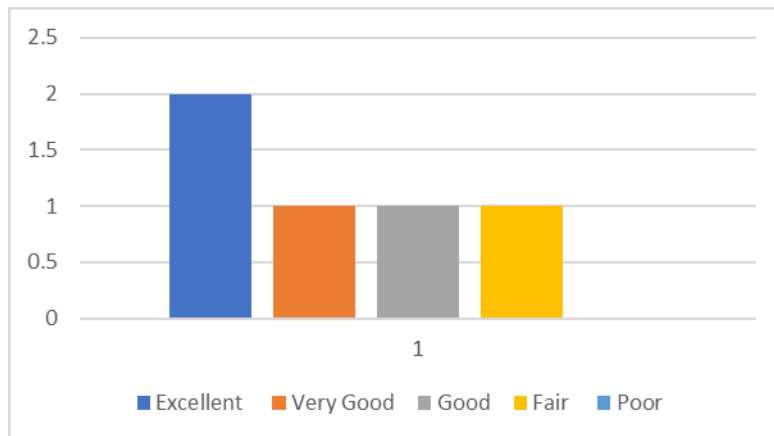
## Results

18 responses were received.

### Question 1

If you have joined the Farms Estate as a new tenant within the last 12 - 18 months, how would you rate the application and award process?

5 responded with a rating to this question 80% felt the process was good or better.



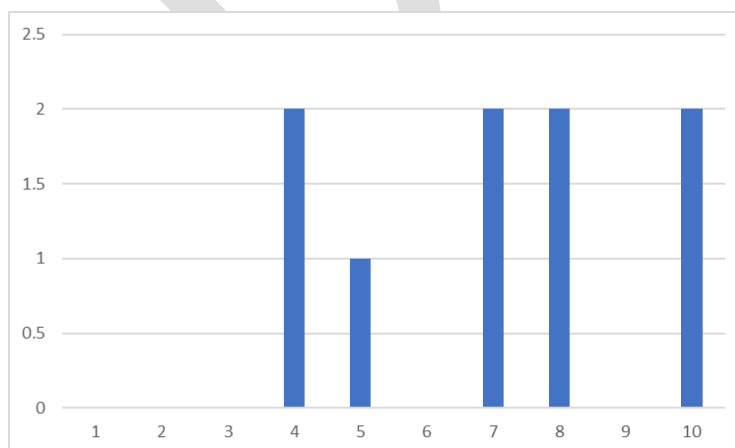
Comments included:

'To ascertain the ingoing valuation, to ensure the incoming tenant can afford this commitment from the outset.'

### Question 2

How would you rate the new entrants guide (on a scale 1 to 10)?

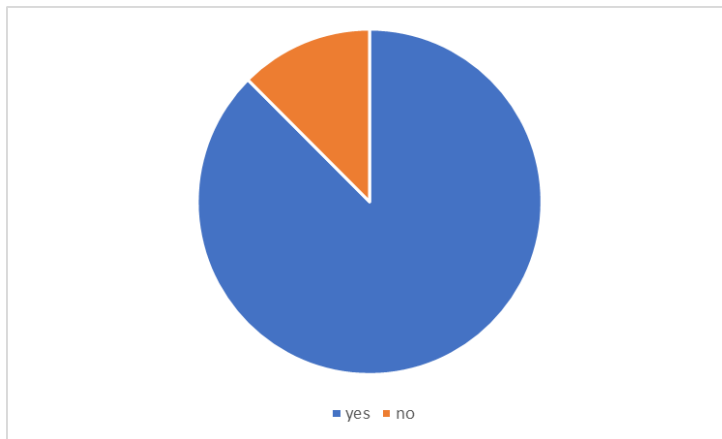
9 responded with a rating to this question, with an average rating of 7.



### Question 3

If you have renewed, reviewed, or received a new lease agreement within the last 12-18 months, was the lease agreement clear and comprehensive?

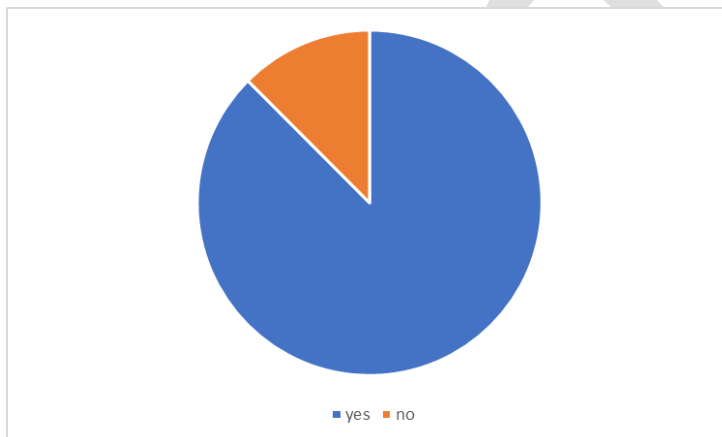
8 responded with a rating to this question. 87.5% agreed the lease agreement clear and comprehensive.



**Question 4**

Was this process clear, fair, open & transparent?

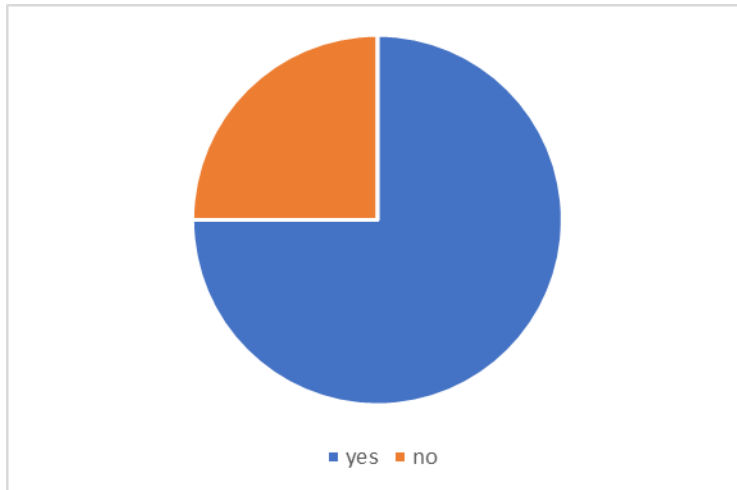
8 responded with a rating to this question. 87.5% agreed the process was clear, fair, open & transparent.



**Question 5**

Was the lease/renewal process managed in a timely manner and did you receive regular updates/communications during the transition?

8 responded with a rating to this question. 75% agreed the lease was complete in a timely manner and regular communications were received.



### Question 6

Within the last 12 - 18 months how would you rate the level of support received (if required) from the Land Agents during this time?

17 responded with a rating to this question. 59% felt the support was good or better.



Comments included:

'It always comes back to lack of funds, Dan does his best though'

'When I joined the estate there were at least 1-2 staff dealing with queries. Claudia's workload is clearly too much, the Norse support staff are useless and nothing is dealt with in a timely fashion. Meeting cancelled with very short notice.'

'Tends to only be one point of contact'

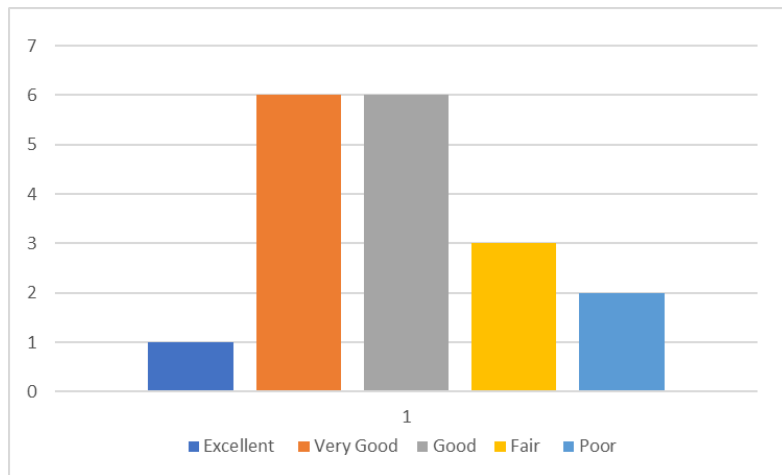
'Always on end of phone or email if needed'

'Needs to be easier to contact agent by phone'

### Question 7

If you lease a farmhouse, how would you rate this property?

18 responded with a rating to this question. 72% felt the property was good or better.



Comments included:

'Kitchen poor, driveway poor. Damp in the house. Not energy efficient.'

'Windows need replacing. New smoke alarms required. New front door required. Mould and damp issues on all interior outer walls. One window that is screwed shut should have been replaced in 2015!'

'Even though it has had a lot of investment before we came here there are still some damp issues. Also, repairs are taking ages and are still not done after 2.5 years.'

'Little bit of damp in property! But being sorted.'

'Post renovation, this property is significantly improved from when I moved in. The rollercoaster of a renovations process is well documented and resulted in compensation, as a direct result of the contract being awarded to the cheapest quote.'

'Despite a large renovation project, damp is still quite an issue.'

'Still waiting for works to be finished.'

'We live in a lovely old property that has had a lot of work done when we moved in. I can not say that the work was to the highest standard and unfortunately, I think DCC were ripped off. Waterproofing works have not been done to a high enough standard to resolve problems. We are in prime weather to do the work, but it will be left until it rains again.'

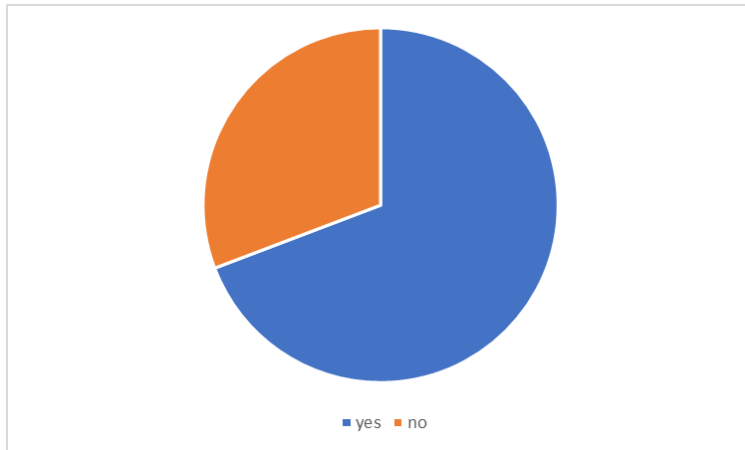
'The property was empty for 18 months, and works could have been completed, however work is taking place during our tenancy.'

'Could do with an out of hours number for emergencies e.g. water leak, electric fault etc'

### Question 8

If you have required any property maintenance on your farm in the last 12-18 months that is the responsibility of the landlord, did you find this easy to report?

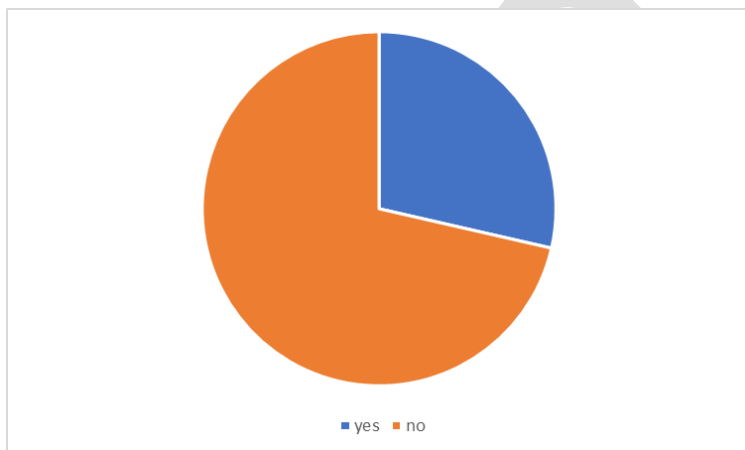
13 responded with a rating to this question. 69% agreed property maintenance was easy to report.



### Question 9

If you have required any property maintenance on your farm within the last 12-18 months that is the responsibility of the landlord, was this resolved swiftly and/or were you kept informed regarding the status of the repair?

14 responded with a rating to this question. 29% agreed the repair was resolved swiftly and they were kept informed re the status.



Comments included:

'It has taken some time to resolve maintenance issues, though it seems to be contractors that hold things up.'

'Bedroom window is screwed closed...by previous tenants....this was reported in 2015.

Smoke alarms required for dining room as the house is so drafty that the smoke gets pulled up and past the current smoke alarm! This was reported 3 years ago.'

'Shorten the process, too much form filling and time wasted.'

'It's easy to report if Dan or Claudia pick up the phone but that is where any easiness ends.

Storm damage caused by the major storms in February 2022 took more than 12 months to fix. The shed was only fixed when I threatened to reduce my rent payment. Leaking roof had to wait until March to be replaced, internal damp issues still outstanding.

This pattern is constantly recurring, outstanding reports on safety issues and further collapsing sheds are yet to be viewed by a surveyor despite multiple reports.'

'I have a non-functioning cesspit which is overflowing and running down a cow track and into a stream. This has been surveyed, I was told tenders would be completed for the job.

No one has been out, and another month has passed with raw sewage running on top of the track into a water course. This was reported approximately 2 years ago.'

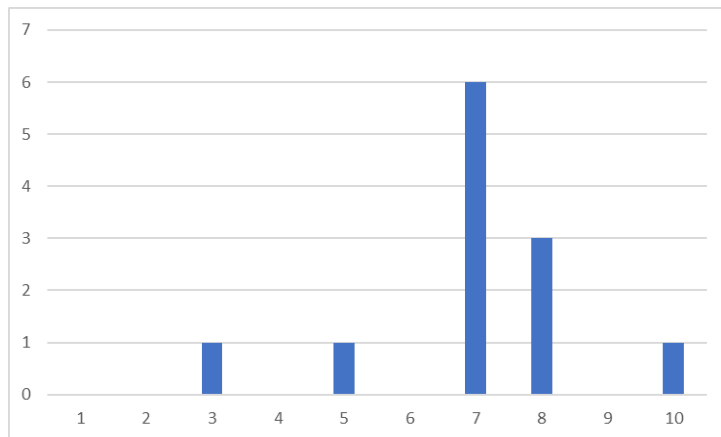
'Always chasing and no progression.'

'Needs to be easier to get repairs done.'

### Question 10

If any property maintenance on your farm within the last 12-18 months, arranged by the landlord, how would you rate the quality of work undertaken? (where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is excellent).

12 responded with a rating to this question with an average rating of 7.



Comments included:

'Just more timely.'

'Some work is to a perfectly suitable standard but some of that is fixing previous work that was done to a terrible standard. Due to budget issues, many of the works carried out are as effective as putting a plaster on a water leak. One major issue is the quality of surveyors that Norse seem to employ. Honestly, I wouldn't trust any of them to organise taking the bins out, let alone a job of any importance.'

'Some contractors seem to be better than others.'

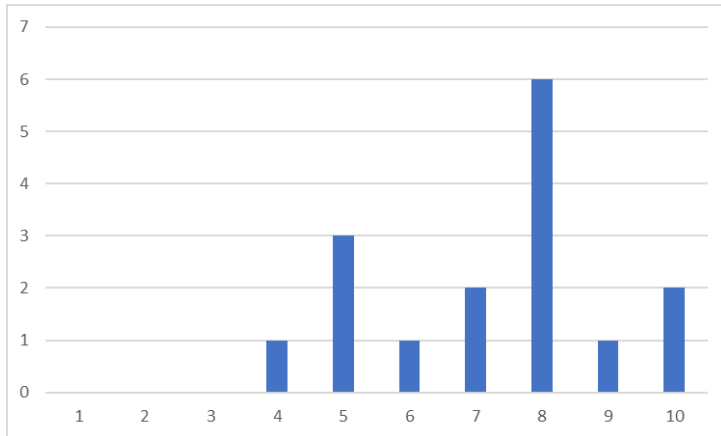
'The contractor wasn't very good and the project management was poor.'

'I think on any work/job that takes place on a DCC property an independent person who does not work for the company doing the work. There should be site manager to oversee and make sure the work is done to an acceptable standard and no corners are cut.'

### Question 11

If you read the County Farms Newsletter, please advise how useful and informative you rate this (where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is 'excellent').

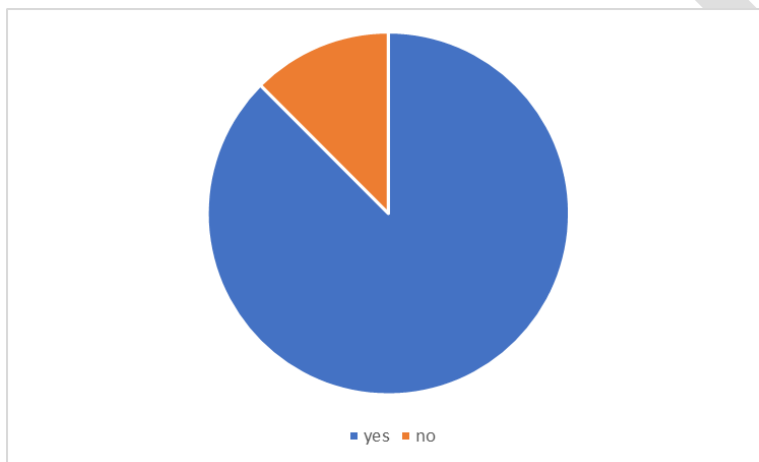
16 responded with a rating to this question with an average rating of 8.



**Question 12**

If you have needed to contact the Land Agents within the last 12 months, have you been able to make contact easily?

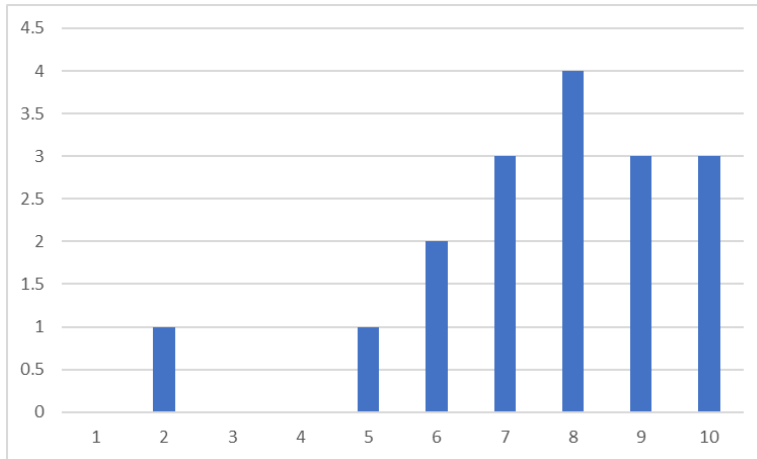
16 responded with a rating to this question. 87.5% stated they were able to contact the land agent easily.



**Question 13**

When contacting the Land Agents how would you rate the level of service? (where 1 is 'poor' and 10 is 'excellent').

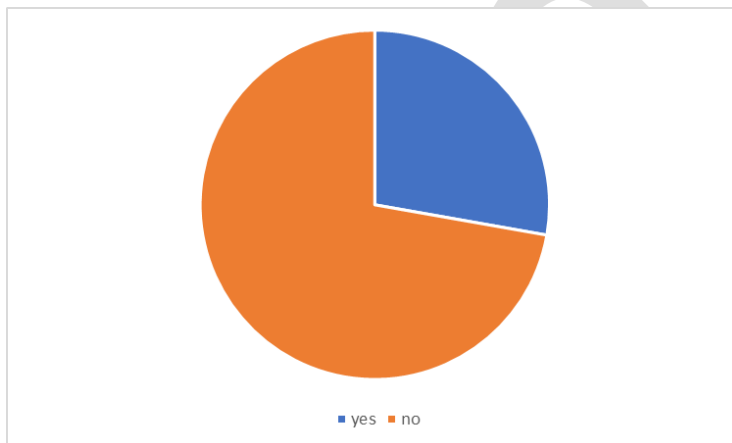
17 responded with a rating to this question with an average rating of 7.5.



**Question 14**

If you felt the need to offer feedback a compliment or a complaint - would you know how to access this process?

18 responded with a rating to this question. 27% stated they would know how to access a feedback process.

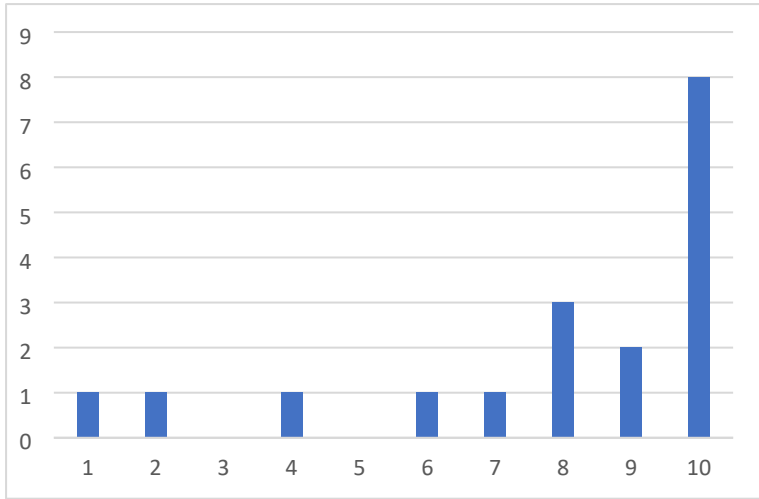


**Question 15**

Finally, based on your experience over the last 12-18 months, please advise if you would recommend leasing a DCC farm to friends or family (where 1 is 'never' and 10 is 'definitely').

18 responded with a rating to this question with an average rating of 7.8 and a Net Promotor Score of +33.





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## Conclusions

Whilst the volume of responses from the farms tenants is low with only 26% of the tenants contacted responding to the survey the following highlight the key themes.

- Overall, the new tenant process and support was viewed positively.
- Overall, the lease / lease renewal process was viewed positively.
- Overall, the process to obtain a repair requires improvement.
- Overall, communications were viewed positively, however there was a clear need to share the feedback process.
- Overall, the majority would recommend the Devon County Farms Estate.

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## Recommendations

| Recommendation  | Activity  |
|---|---|
| Investigate potential for further support/communications for new tenants.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility of further mentor support across estate.</li> <li>• Ensure contact details and 'service level' response is clear to manage expectations.</li> </ul>  |
| Review potential to increase communications/updates regarding new/renew of lease.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure contact details and 'service level' response is clear to manage expectations.</li> <li>• Ensure regular updates regarding lease by agreement, so expectations are managed and contact point clear.</li> </ul>   |
| Review end to end repair process, with the potential for standards to ensure expectations clear, potential for a named contact, improved communications, managed timelines and formal work sign off.                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known issues with end-to-end process – potential changes to investigate;</li> <li>• Sharing 24/7 Helpdesk contact and definition of emergency repairs to speed up this process.</li> <li>• Communications with tenant re where are in the process and enable a named contact when passed from Dan/Claudia to the repairs team, with clear escalation point if no contact.</li> <li>• Written specification of repairs within scope and comms regarding likely start/completion time to ensure expectations clearly managed by all parties.</li> <li>• Review process / introduce training to ensure internal escalation of issues with contractors to review and remove from database/future bidding for repairs work.</li> <li>• Access to DCC feedback process if dispute regarding completion of works that is not being resolved.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Briefing to tenants to ensure aware of access to provide Devon County Council direct feedback process.</p> <p>Annual reminder to tenants to enable feedback (compliments and complaints) through the Devon County process.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition into winter newsletter.</li> <li>• Briefing to new tenants via new tenants' pack.</li> <li>• Reminder annually in newsletter of following information</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://devon.gov.uk">Customer feedback procedure - Have Your Say (devon.gov.uk)</a>.</p> <p><b>Contacting us</b></p> <p>Should you wish to provide feedback or make a complaint, please contact:</p> <p>Customer Relations Team<br/>Room 120<br/>County Hall<br/>Topsham Road<br/>Exeter, EX2 4QD</p>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Tel: 0800 212 783 (free from landlines)<br>Email: <a href="mailto:customer.relations@devon.gov.uk">customer.relations@devon.gov.uk</a>   |
| Repeat questionnaire May-June 2024 to compare results with this baseline but investigate alternative method on contacting tenants to increase participation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Publicise in newsletter.</li><li>• Maintain anonymity of respondents.</li><li>• Issue questionnaire via email and hard copy.</li></ul> |

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## The Devon County Council Farms Estate

Guide to being a Devon County Council Farm Tenant



# Contents

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|   |    |
|---|----|
| Introduction  | 3  |
| Who's who - Farms Estate Committee                    | 4  |
| Who's who - The Managing Agent                        | 5  |
| The process   | 6  |
| The valuation procedure                               | 8  |
| The tenancy agreement                                 | 10 |
| Rent  | 11 |
| Repairs, maintenance and insurance                    | 12 |
| Visits  | 13 |
| What is expected of you                               | 14 |
| Diversification                                       | 15 |
| Moving on/progressing to bigger holdings              | 16 |
| Case studies  | 17 |
| Farmwise  | 18 |
| Appendix 1 - The level of expected tenants competence | 19 |
| Appendix 2—Landlords consent policy                   | 20 |
| Appendix 3 - Important notices                        | 22 |
| Appendix 4—General Data Protection Regulations        | 22 |

# Introduction

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The Devon County Farms Estate comprises 9570 acres (3873 ha) or thereabouts spread across the county. There are 65 residential equipped holdings ranging in size from 37 to 300 acres. The aim of the Estate is to provide first opportunities for applicants to become farmers on their own account.

We look for candidates who can bring new blood, new thinking and new vitality into the agricultural industry with enthusiasm, dedication, drive and ambition. You will need sufficient tenants capital, experience and/or training in the area of agriculture you intend to enter and the foresight to identify and exploit new rural or land based

enterprises and business opportunities.

The current policy enables tenants to stay on the Estate for a maximum of 25 years. Initial starter farm tenancies are seven years and can be extended to a maximum of another seven years. Progression farm tenancies are ordinarily 15 years.

It is expected tenants will look to progress into the private sector as an owner occupier, share farmers or tenant of another Estate as soon as they are ready and able to do so.



# Who's who - Farms Estate Committee

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The Farms Estate Committee is made up of 7 elected County Councillors and two co-opted members. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the strategic, policy and financial affairs of the Estate. The Committee meet formally four times a year but also meet for site visits, interviews and other matters of importance throughout the year.



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**Cllr Jeremy Yabsley**

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Devon EX15 3XG

[richard.chesterton@devon.gov.uk](mailto:richard.chesterton@devon.gov.uk)



# Who's who - The Managing Agents

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The estate is managed by South West Norse Ltd, a Joint Venture company set up to provide property services to Devon County Council.

Dan and Claudia will be your main points of contact. Please call them in the office to discuss any matters you are unsure of.

In addition, Norse provide Building Surveyors to procure all the Landlord's repairs, maintenance and minor works. Please contact Dan or Claudia in the first instance for repairs and maintenance issues during office hours. In an emergency out of hours, please contact the on call surveyor on: **07826 858727**



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Director of Estates & Valuation

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**Claudia Smith**

Graduate Land Agent

01392 351067

07920 534994

[claudia.smith@norsegroup.co.uk](mailto:claudia.smith@norsegroup.co.uk)

# Who's who - Other Representatives

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In addition to the elected members on the Farms Committee there is also a Tenants Representative, currently Liz Warner, Lower Henland Farm, Kentisbeare ([info@westcountryquail.co.uk](mailto:info@westcountryquail.co.uk)).

Liz is there to represent the interests of the tenants at Farms Estate meetings and interviews.

A member of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs (YFC) is also invited to Farms Estate meetings. The current representative is Megan Broom who can be contacted via the YFC office on 01647 24120 or [admin@devonyfc.co.uk](mailto:admin@devonyfc.co.uk)

The Farms Estate tenants get together from time to time for farm walks and meetings. The group is currently led by Tom Forward of Cobberton Farm, Dartington. Their details can be provided should you be successful and would like to join the group.

# The process

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Most tenancies change over on either Lady Day (25 March) or Michaelmas (29 September).

Farms to let will be advertised usually around five to six months before they are due to change hands. Adverts are placed in national publications. In addition we also keep a mailing list and notify everyone on it by email when we have farms available.

There will be a viewing day held at the farm where Dan or Claudia will be available to answer any questions and to give out application forms. Viewing days begin at the allotted time (usually 10am or 2pm) with an introduction talk, please make sure you arrive promptly so you do not miss any of the information provided.

Following the viewing day there will be a couple of weeks to put your application and business plan together. Applications must be received by 5pm on the deadline day. We will not be able to accept them if they are late.

## Applications

An application form will be provided at the viewing day. This is just a basic form to collect the minimum information required and most applicants provide us with a separate business plan document so that the detail about the proposed enterprises can be explained. As part of the application we look for a minimum of two years cash flow and budget forecasts. In addition we also request a small photo of the applicant so that we can remember any conversations we may have had with you at the viewing day.

Applications must be received in paper form in a plain envelope clearly marked with the farm you wish to apply for.

Shortlisted candidates will then be contacted to arrange a home visit.

Home visits are usually conducted by Dan. This is an opportunity to go through your business plan in more detail, answer any questions you might have and prepare for the types of questions that might come up in the interview.

Interviews take place at the Norse office, Venture House. The interview panel will consist of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Farms Committee and one other member of the Farms Committee on a rota basis. Additionally, the Tenants Representative will also be present as well as Dan and Claudia to facilitate the interviews. It is the three elected Councillors who decide who gets the farm. If possible the members of the interview panel will attend the viewing day to meet candidates.

If you are unsuccessful we will happily provide feedback on your application to aid with future submissions. Due to the demand for farms don't be disheartened if you are not shortlisted at the first attempt. The application process is very competitive and we can only shortlist the best and most comprehensive business plans.

Please find statements relating to the Right to Rent under the Immigration Act 2017 and General Data Protection Regulations at appendix 3 and 4

You will also be asked to provide consent for us to contact your local Trading Standards office with regard to checking animal health records.

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## Taking on a tenancy

If you are successful following the interview, you will receive a letter detailing the terms and conditions of the offer. You will have 21 days in which to accept the offer.

Providing your references, credit checks etc are acceptable and the offer letter is signed then your tenancy agreement will be prepared and arrangements made for the changeover of tenancy.

### Appointing an agent

After you have accepted the offer for the farm the first thing to do is appoint an agent to act on your behalf. The agent must be a member of the RICS and a Fellow of the CAAV, ideally with good levels of experience of tenant right valuations.

### Why appoint an agent?

An agent will act on your behalf to negotiate with the outgoing Tenant's agent the Tenant Right Valuation, dilapidations claim and if not concluded previously, the valuation of the outgoing tenants fixtures, fittings and improvements. Your agent will normally act for the Landlord as well to keep things simple and to keep costs down.

## Case study - James & Naomi Law (pictured front cover)

James and Naomi Law were successful in their first application for a farm, namely Coppa Dolla Farm, Denbury and took on the tenancy in March 2016. Although they had not put forward an application previously they had done their homework and had looked at other farms before deciding that Coppa Dolla would be the best fit with their ambitions to run their own farm.

James works for a local dairy farm and Naomi at the local agricultural merchants. Before taking on Coppa Dolla they were spending a lot of time, effort and resources in rearing calves on various land parcels across the district and greatly benefited from being able to consolidate their efforts on one holding. Ultimately James and Naomi want to be dairy farmers and are using Coppa Dolla as a base to build capital to then convert into dairy cattle when the right opportunity presents itself. They still work long hours on and off the farm but the platform to grow their business has enabled them to pay off their borrowings after only 2 and a half years at the farm.

Naomi admits the application process was tough but it has held them in good stead to be able to manage their own business and make measured and considered decisions.

"Having a council farm has allowed us to really concentrate on our business and push it forward. The whole application and interview process is daunting when you get shortlisted but this is your chance to shine, show the Council how passionate you are about farming and your livestock, it's definitely worth it!"

# The valuation procedure

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## The upfront valuation

This is the valuation of the outgoing tenants improvements, fixtures, fittings and chattels that he or she intends to leave on the holding for your benefit. Usually if there has been enough time prior to the viewing day this will have been agreed between the outgoing tenant, his agent and the Land Agents for the County Council. This figure and list of items to be taken over by the incoming tenant can then be presented to interested applicants on the viewing day.

Where outgoing tenants have given short notice of their intent to vacate the holding, this is not always possible. The fixtures and fittings then either have to be inspected and valued before the new tenant moves in or will be considered on the valuation day itself.

The ingoing tenant is then required to inspect the list of fixtures and fittings to make sure that all the items are present and that they are found to be in the condition they were considered to be at the time of the valuation. Fixtures will either be taken over in one of the following two conditions

1. The item being safe, compliant with current standards and regulations (or otherwise

exempt) and in good tenantable order and repair. Or,

2. The item to be taken over as found, i.e. in its current condition which is generally accepted as being tired, a little dilapidated but nevertheless working and reasonably functional/useful.

The money owed for these fixtures and fittings is then paid over to the outgoing tenant within 28 days of moving into the farm unless otherwise instructed by The Land Agents. If there are items missing or they are not fit for purpose please contact your agent straight away who will be able to raise it with the outgoing tenant's agent. You will probably be required to obtain estimates for repairing the fixtures so that your agent can renegotiate the valuation.

Sometimes the landlord will have elected to take over other fixtures and fittings. The ingoing tenant will also be asked to ensure items taken over by the landlord are found to be in the condition they were considered to be in at the time of the valuation.

## Tenant Right Valuation

The valuation day is usually undertaken within a week of the new tenancy commencing or very soon afterwards. This involves the two agents inspecting the farm to assess the tenant right matters. Tenant right matters include back fencing, tenant's pastures (fields scheduled as arable but left in grass by the outgoing tenant), fertility and manurial value claims, lime applied, forage left on the holding, straw, other consumables and any remaining fixtures not included in the upfront valuation. All of the above matters will have been provided at the outgoing tenants expense and where he or she is leaving them on the holding for the benefit for the incoming tenant, they may be entitled to additional compensation.

## Soil Sampling

At the start of your tenancy you will be required to arrange soil sampling of all the fields on the holding. If you are charged for this service, this will be at your expense. This should be provided to the County Council within one month of entering the farm. The analysis will be used to sense check any of the current outgoing tenant's claims for 'routine improvements' and as a benchmark for your good husbandry of the holding during the term of your tenancy, and again to sense check any outgoing Tenants claims for 'routine improvements' your agent may claim on your behalf at your end of tenancy.

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## Dilapidations

Your appointed agent will also inspect the holding and claim the cost of remedying any potential breach of tenancy such as the failure of the outgoing tenant to maintain and repair the holding in accordance with his or her obligations. The holding should be left by an outgoing tenant in 'good tenantable order and repair' unless there exist notes protecting him or her from having to do so. Any money drawn for dilapidations will be paid over to the incoming tenant either at the start of

the tenancy or as and when the remedial works are complete depending on the severity of the state of disrepair on changeover.

Once money has been drawn for dilapidations and paid over to you it is deemed that the dilapidations are now corrected and the farm is back in good condition. If they are not corrected at the end of your tenancy then as the outgoing tenant you will be dilapidated in the same manner as occurred when you took on the farm.

## Inventory and valuation

Once the outgoing tenant's fixtures, fittings and improvements, tenant right and dilapidations claim has been agreed, the two agents will record the agreement in a document known as an Inventory and Valuation.

This document must be kept safe for your end of tenancy valuation. Included within the Inventory

and Valuation may be some notes taken by the agents on the valuation day to protect the tenants from any unreasonably onerous or difficult repairs.

The specific notes in the Inventory and Valuation will supersede any terms and conditions contained within the Tenancy Agreement.

## Records of condition

Occasionally farms or bare land will be let using a record of condition rather than a full valuation. If you take on land let with a record of condition, the outgoing tenant will only be required to leave the land in no worse a condition than when taken over. If at the end of the tenancy the land is found to be in a worse condition than the original schedule, then the outgoing tenant will be dilapidated the cost of making good the individual items up to the standard of the original schedule. The ingoing tenant will again take on this land under a new photographic record of condition taken and made at the start of the tenancy but disregarding any

dilapidations for which the incoming tenant will have drawn down from the outgoer to put right. The appointed valuer will be instructed to prepare the new record of condition and the cost will be borne equally between the landlord and the ingoing tenant.

There will usually also be a Tenant Right Valuation on any fields let under a record of condition and the ingoing tenant will again pay the outgoing tenant any sum awarded for tenant right matters.

# The tenancy agreement

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Farms will always be let on a Farm Business Tenancy (FBT) for a fixed period of time. The County Council has adopted a standard form of FBT developed in accordance with the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.

Your tenancy agreement will be sent to you before you move in. This agreement is in a non negotiable standard form for most farms but it is advisable that you read it and understand it. If in any doubt as to the meaning of any contract term, it is advisable you seek advice from your Agent or Solicitor before signing.

You will then need to sign both copies and return them to the office for completion. Once the legal department has signed the agreements you will keep one copy and we shall keep the other in the office.

A copy of the County Council's standard form of FBT is available to inspect during normal office hours at the Land Agents current address. The standard FBT will always be available for inspection at farm viewing days.

## Stamp Duty Land Tax

Stamp Duty Land Tax may be due on the lease. Upon completion of the tenancy agreement and five years thereafter, you will be responsible for the submission of a Land Transaction Return (LTR) to the Inland Revenue and payment of any Stamp Duty Land Tax. It is a legal requirement to submit a LTR within 30 days of completion. We are also advised that taking possession of the property contained within the lease would constitute completion being 'substantially performed'. The 30 day period will therefore commence from the date

of occupation or from the date of completion whichever is sooner.

You may wish to consider obtaining independent professional or legal advice on this matter. Land Transaction Returns are a tenants legal responsibility and can be obtained from the Inland Revenue on 0845 302 1472. You should be aware that fines may be imposed by the Inland Revenue for failure to comply with the regulations.

## Lease Registration

Under Section 27(2)(b)(i) of the Land Registration Act 2002 leases granted for a term of more than seven years from the date of the grant are compulsorily registrable.

Applications to register the lease must be lodged on form AP1 which forms part of Rule 13 of the Land Registration Rules 2003. A certified copy of the lease and the appropriate fee under the current Land Registration Fee Order must accompany the application, together with evidence that the SDLT requirements have been met. For more information please see '[Practice guide 25: leases – when to register](#)' which is available at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

# Rent

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## Rent Formula

Rent for holdings let under the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995 (FBTs) is based on open market value. “The rent at which the holding might reasonably be expected to be let on the open market by a willing landlord to a willing tenant taking into account all relevant factors.”

## Rent offers

Application forms for farms to let include a rent offer form. The offer should be based on what you believe the market rent is for the farm and should correlate with your business plan. The interview panel set the rent after considering all the offers and comparable information from other farm lettings on the Estate. The interview panel aim to set a sustainable rent. The Council reserve the right not to accept the highest or any offer.

## Rent payments

Your rent will be paid by direct debit in 10 monthly instalments with a payment holiday in April and May. You will still receive however, a half yearly

demand on 25 March and 29 September from the Devon County Council finance department even if you have been paying your direct debits. This is nothing to be alarmed about; we have to raise the invoice for accounting purposes.

## Rent reviews

Your rent will be fixed for the first three years of your tenancy. Either landlord or tenant have an opportunity on the third anniversary of the tenancy to request the rent be reviewed by serving a notice. The notice must be given 12 months in advance of the date the new rent will take effect, so therefore there is 12 months in which to negotiate a new rent. After a rent review, both the landlord and tenant will have to wait a further three years before another review can be triggered.

If a review is not triggered on the third anniversary of the tenancy commencement date or last rent review the opportunity to request a review rolls forward annually until it is triggered.

# Repairs, maintenance and insurance

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The repair, maintenance and insurance liabilities for landlord and tenant can be found in the letting particulars and also in your tenancy agreement. If in doubt please call the office.

## Landlord repairs

If you do have a maintenance issue and you think it is the Landlord's responsibility please call Dan or Claudia in the office who will arrange for a Building Surveyor to deal with it.

If you identify something on the farm which you believe may be a Health and Safety risk to you and your family please notify Dan or Claudia immediately. A Health and Safety pack is provided for you at the start of your tenancy with information about the farm, especially asbestos, to help with risk assessments and your Health and Safety plan.

The County Council use a wide range of contractors. Most contractors will make an appointment to visit however from time to time they may need to visit without an appointment to carry out emergency repairs. If you are unsure of who they are, ask for their identification and phone Dan or Claudia to double check.

## Tenant repairs

If the repair is the liability of the tenant, then please ensure that you only use reputable, competent and qualified contractors to undertake the repair promptly. You are responsible for the quality of their work but you also have a responsibility for their safety and the safety of others they may affect.

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 state that the dutyholder will be the client i.e the person who has requested the works. If you appoint a contractor to work on your behalf on the holding you are therefore the duty holder. Please ensure that you adhere to the 2015

Regulations.

## Insurance

The landlord will only insure its buildings against the main insured risks. The landlord will not insure tenants buildings, fixtures, fittings, chattels and live and deadstock.

Please ensure that you are insured at all times and that your insurance premium is reviewed regularly. We recommend that tenants take out tenant's accidental damage cover. For example, in the event that a fault with an item of tenant's equipment ie a faulty washing machine causes damage to the Landlord's property, it ensures that the costs to repair the Landlord's property can be covered.

In addition, we recommend that tenants take out personal injury insurance. For example, in the event you break a leg and need to employ temporary cover to manage the farm, the cost of that additional labour is covered.



# Visits

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## Routine Inspections

Dan and Claudia are happy to visit at any time to discuss any matters concerning your business plans, tenancy or anything else. Land Agents will aim to visit each holding once a year to carry out a routine farm buildings inspection to ensure there are no causes for concern.

## Formal monitoring visits

As a new entrant you will have two formal visits from the Senior Land Agent and the Chairman/ Members of the County Farms Estate Committee. The first one is at approximately 18 months and the second at 60 months. These more formal visits are simply a chance to monitor how you are getting on and how the business is developing. The Senior

Land Agent will then report back to the rest of the Committee at the next meeting. You will be assessed against the list of Tenant's competencies (Appendix 1). It is not expected that you are able to achieve all of these competencies initially but you are expected to be seen to be working towards achieving them throughout your tenancy term.

## Improvements

If you wish to make any improvements to the farm please discuss this with Dan or Claudia prior to beginning work. You will need landlord's consent for physical improvements. This makes sure that the improvements are carried out in a proper manner and gives you the right to be compensated for them at the end of tenancy if they add rental value to the holding. Under the 1995 Agricultural Tenancies Act, compensation for improvements is calculated on *"the amount equal to the increase attributable to the improvement in the value of the holding at the termination of the tenancy as land comprised in a tenancy."*

There is no right to compensation for fixtures, alterations you make or plant and equipment you provide without Landlord's consent.

The approved Landlord's consent policy is attached at Appendix 2.

Any improvements you make to the farm must be in accordance with current industry standards. For example any farm buildings erected on the holding must use CE marked structural steel and meet the British Standard for designing agricultural buildings.

# What is expected of you?

In order to excel on the Farms Estate, tenants need to be able to demonstrate they are striving to be the best in the business. Competition for tenancies in the private sector is fierce, therefore in order to stand out from the crowd we encourage tenants to promote themselves and their businesses as much as possible. This could be through entering awards or taking part in events like Devon County Council's Farmwise or hosting Open Farm Sunday.

Assisting the County Council in achieving its aims and objectives for the Estate is also important. Enabling the Landlord to make use of redundant buildings for small rural business lets or co-

operating with the Get Devon Buzzing campaign are just two examples of how you can play your part in maintaining a thriving and successful Devon County Farms Estate.



# Diversification

Whilst many of our tenants are striving to be the best, most efficient and effective dairy, beef or sheep farmers diversification can be an important part of a small starter farm business. Many of our tenants have diversified into B&B, livery, direct selling, added value processing like ice cream or more unusual enterprises like quail or asparagus.

Diversification ventures that can enhance the social and economic prosperity of the local area by providing local goods and services or by creating new local employment opportunities will be particularly welcomed.

Any future diversification scheme should be discussed between landlord and tenant before beginning the project. Diversification schemes will often involve making improvements to the farm

and it is important that these are discussed before the work begins so that both the landlord and the tenant can understand how that improvement will be treated at the end of the tenancy.

Some diversification may not add value to the holding and therefore it is important that you obtain agreement with the Landlord before you invest any money.

If you believe there are any buildings on the farm that are surplus to your requirements but might lend themselves to be small units for other rural businesses, please contact the Land Agents.



# Moving on/progressing to bigger holdings

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Throughout the course of your tenancy there will hopefully be a number of progression farms on the Estate available for you to look at and apply for. As soon as a progression farm becomes available you will be notified and invited to a viewing day. From time to time we will also send details of farms to let on other Estates if we think they may be of interest.

If you are successful in an application for an opportunity off the Estate please let us know as soon as possible. Normally you are required to give 12 months notice but the landlord may accept shorter notice if it helps you move on to a bigger

and better farm. Once you know that you are vacating the farm early, it is vital to get your agent in to put together a list of fixtures and fittings so that their value can be agreed prior to the end of tenancy.

The County Council can only offer you fixed term opportunities on the Estate so that the number of opportunities provided each year is maximised. It is imperative therefore that as soon as you feel you and your business are ready to move on to a bigger and better holding, you at least begin to look. The philosophy of the Estate is to provide a 'start' in the industry, not a career for life!



# Case study

## Rachel Leonard

Rachel Leonard took on New Gulliford Farm, Dawlish in autumn 2013 and moved her herd of South Devon cattle from short term lettings into the 91 acre livestock farm. Rachel is a first generation farmer with a passion for cows and the countryside. She spent no time at all getting to grips with the holding, the caravan site, and countryside stewardship scheme and very quickly outgrew the farm.

After less than 18 months on the holding Rachel was successful in securing a much larger tenancy at Northcott Barton Farm, Chulmleigh and she moved her business there in March 2015.

Rachel has thrived at the larger privately owned 190 acre livestock farm and went on to win Best Woman in Farming at the

Devon Farm Business Awards in May 2017.

Rachel runs Northcott Barton Farm single handedly as well as raising her daughter as a single parent. In addition the farm also has a holiday cottage which enables Rachel to pass on her infectious enthusiasm for her cows.



# Case study

## Sam and Nell Walker

Sam and Nell moved to North Ground Farm, Milton Abbot in March 2014. North Ground Farm is a 113 acre mixed livestock starter farm. Sam has managed the farm alongside his part-time lecturer role at Duchy College.

Sam and Nell have always welcomed visitors to the farm, through Open Farm Sunday, college students or young farmer groups. Sam has also been a valuable supporter of the Farmwise event regularly bringing livestock and explaining to children where their food comes from.

In 2017 they were successful in their application for Stantyway Farm on the Clinton Devon Estate.

Stantyway Farm comprises 264 acres on the coast in East Devon and has been let to Sam and Nell for 15 years.

Clinton Devon Estate were impressed with what Sam and Nell had achieved at North Ground and were excited with their plans and ambitions for Stantyway.



# Farmwise

Farmwise was set up in 2012 as an event to help connect children to where their food comes from. The main event takes place each year in October at Westpoint Arena and hosts 1,600 children for the day. In addition a scaled down version also takes place for the three days of the Devon County Show in May.

Farmwise has now helped over 30,000 children to learn more about farming and food. The event would not be such a success without the volunteer

support from tenants on the Devon County Farms Estate.

Tenants who are interested taking part in a variety of roles at the events, from bringing livestock to stewarding zones and putting exhibits together.

We are always keen to welcome new tenants into the Farmwise team.



# Appendix 1

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## The level of expected tenant competence

The following criteria will be used as indicators of a Tenant's ability to manage his/her farm and business affairs, and thus to be considered for either a second seven year tenancy of the same starter holding, or a tenancy of a progression holding.

- Rent up to date.
- Production figures and financial trends not in decline (disregarding externalities and market forces beyond the control of a prudent Tenant).
- An appropriate level of working capital (subject to (ii) above).
- The farm is managed and maintained according to the rules of good husbandry and the terms of the tenancy agreement.
- The Tenant can demonstrate a firm knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting farming, particularly those which may impact upon his/her business.
- Evidence of on-going relevant training and development.
- Details of links or pursuits that the Tenant has established within the industry e.g. membership of organisations.
- A propensity to succeed.
- Evidence of investment on the holding to expand and develop the farm business and viability of the unit.
- Evidence of genuine intention and ability to progress and that all realistic opportunities to do so have been pursued.

- Demonstration of business acumen, innovation and ambition, possibly through:
  - pursuance of agri-environment schemes and implementation of whole farm plans
  - diversification by non-agricultural business use of part farm
  - added value products and/or organic farming
  - collaboration or co-operative ventures with other producers
  - educational access and use of farm
  - permissive Public access and demonstration of rural issues.

It should be noted that it is the overall assessment of the above which will be taken into account and not necessarily the need to fulfil each of the above matters in its entirety.

# Appendix 2

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## Statement relating to Landlord's consent for Tenant's improvements

**1.0** It is understood that banks and other lending institutions may be more inclined to lend Tenants money for capital investment needs if a robust and transparent Landlord's consent letter is provided, which clearly states the basis on which compensation will be paid and the likely level of compensation to be paid on the termination of tenancy.

**2.0** For the purpose of this exercise, it is assumed the scenario is most likely to relate to Tenants occupying farms on Farm Business Tenancies under the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995 (The Act). It is therefore this legislative framework that is considered when proposing this strategy. There will be some differences that will need to be considered for Tenants occupying farms under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986.

**3.0** If Landlord's consent is to be granted, the Landlord will need, in advance, a copy of:

1. Planning consent (if necessary).
2. Detailed drawings, specification etc.
3. Copies of at least three competitive quotes for works estimated to cost over £10,000.

In addition, and on completion of the works, the Landlord will require copies of:

4. Any warranties or guarantees from the supplier/manufacturer/contractor.
5. Receipted invoices for works carried out.
6. Evidence of any grant funding support that may have been obtained

7. Evidence of any tax allowance that may have been set against the cost of providing the improvement.

8. Copies of any other requisite statutory documentation i.e. WQE3 forms from the Environment Agency.

**4.0** Compensation provision:

**4.1** S.16 of The Act provides the right for Tenants to claim compensation for Tenant's improvements.

S.20 (1) of The Act sets the measure of compensation payable as 'the amount of compensation payable to the Tenant under S.16 of this Act in respect of any Tenant's improvement shall be an amount equal to the increase attributable to the improvement in the value of the holding at the termination of the tenancy as land comprised in the tenancy'.

*The Devon County Council Farms Estate Strategic Review March 2010*

**5.0** The Regulatory Reform (Agricultural Tenancies) (England and Wales) Order 2006

**5.1** The above Order adopted in October 2006, which followed the recommendations of the Tenancy Reform Industry Group (TRIG), resulted in a modification of S.20 of The Act enabling Landlord and Tenant to agree a cap on compensation which will be the lesser of:

- that calculated on the statutory basis of S.20(1)
- the 'compensation limit'.

**5.2** The parties are free to agree the amount of the 'compensation limit'. There is no bar on this being only a nominal figure although case law would suggest it should not be nil. If the parties cannot agree the amount, the limit is to be the amount



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equal to the cost to the Tenant of making the improvement.

Ordinarily the basis of compensation to be applied will be in accordance with S.20 (1) of The Act.

However, for any Tenant's improvements:

(a) with an anticipated compensatory liability at the end of tenancy greater than £10,000

(b) consisting of a bespoke, business specific nature not likely to be required by the average hypothetical incoming Tenant

(c) consisting of dairy or milk production plant and equipment, cubicle divisions etc proposed on a farm let under a mixed user clause although in the majority of cases, there will be a general presumption against granting Landlord's consent for such proposals.

**5.3** The managing agents are to seek the prior written approval of the Farms Estate Committee before granting Landlord's consent and, if consent is to be granted, the Committee is to set the compensation limit in accordance with S.20 (4B) of The Act.

**5.4** Subject to the above criteria, Landlord's consent will not be unreasonably withheld.

**5.5** Please note, this policy relates exclusively to physical improvements. It does not relate to routine improvements or intangible advantages such as planning consents under The Act.

# Appendix 3

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## **Immigration Act 2017**

Prospective tenants will be required to provide evidence to confirm or prove the County Council can let the residential unit or units to all or any intended occupiers and that no intended occupiers are disqualified by any immigration status from entering into the lease or remaining in occupation of the dwelling or dwellings for the entire term of the lease.

## **The money laundering, terrorist financing and transfer of funds (information on the payer) regulations 2017**

Prospective tenants will be required to provide all or any information required by the above regulations to satisfy the landlords and the landlord's agents customer due diligence checks necessitated by the above regulations.

## **Important notice**

This document has been produced by South West Norse Ltd for and on behalf of Devon County Council and is intended for the sole purpose of assisting new tenants at the start of their tenancy. The information contained in this document is intended to provide useful guidance and act as a reference point, but it is not a definitive statement applicable in all circumstances, nor does it represent a definitive statement or guide as to the law. Independent professional or legal advice should be sought as appropriate.

UPDATED: 25.10.19

# Appendix 4

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## **South West Norse Ltd General Data Protection Regulations - Privacy Notice – Prospective tenants**

### **Who is collecting and using your personal data?**

Devon County Council will act as a "data controller" for any personal data that you provide to us. South West Norse Ltd (Norse) will act as "data processors".

Both Devon County Council and Norse will ensure that the personal data you give us is processed in line with our organisation's Data Protection Policies and in line with your rights under the Data Protection Act 2017 and the EU General Data Protection Regulations.

Should you wish to find out more about Devon County Council's Data Protection Policies please contact the Authority's Data Protection Officer, Martin Lawrence -

Tel: 01392 383000,

Email: [accesstoinformation@devon.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoinformation@devon.gov.uk), or

website: <https://inside.devon.gov.uk/task/gdpr/contact-the-data-protection-officer/>)

# Appendix 4 continued

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## **Why are we collecting your personal data?**

The processing of your personal data is necessary to consider, review and determine your interest in and potential application for a Devon County Council Farm. By providing your personal data to Norse you are giving your consent to your personal data being processed for the reasons outlined in this privacy notice.

## **Who we will share your personal data with?**

We will not share your personal data outside of Devon County Council and Norse unless we are compelled to do so by law.

## **How long will we hold your personal data?**

Devon County Council will retain your personal data for only as long as is necessary, and in line with the Council's record retention schedule, (<https://new.devon.gov.uk/keepingdevonsdata/>).

## **Exercising your rights**

Under the Data Protection Act 2017 and the EU General Data Protection Regulations you have the following rights;

- The right of access to your own personal data
- The right to request rectification or deletion of your personal data
- The right to object to the processing of your personal data
- The right to request a copy of the information you provide us in machine readable format

The right to withdraw your consent to any processing that is solely reliant upon your consent

Should you wish to exercise any of your rights, you should contact the Data Protection Officer.

## **Your right to complain**

Should you wish to complain about the way that your personal data has been handled by Devon County Council, you should write to the Data Protection Officer and clearly outline your case. Your complaint will then be investigated in accordance with the Council's Customer Feedback Procedure. If you remain dissatisfied with the way your personal data has been handled, you may refer the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office whose contact details are below.

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)



BSS/23/12  
Farms Estate Committee  
20 November 2023

## **The County Farms Estate Mental Health Strategy**

Report of the Director of Transformation and Business Services

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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### **1) Recommendation**

That:

- (a) literature be produced and circulated to tenants signposting them to existing mental health support, possibly within the winter newsletter.
- (b) A series of training events be arranged for tenants to discuss mental health, signs and symptoms to be aware of, and steps that can be taken to improve mental health resilience, subject to funding being made available.
- (c) Norse Land Agents be provided with mental health awareness training to ensure early indicators are capable of being identified and tenants can be signposted to appropriate sources of support.
- (d) Periodic 'pasty and pint nights' be arranged for tenants to get together with the Land Agents to meet and chat on an informal basis.
- (e) A business case be prepared to consider adopting more of the initiatives already implemented by the Duchy of Cornwall's 'Tenants Support and Wellbeing Service' that cannot be delivered without additional funding being made available.

### **2) Background / Introduction**

- 2.1 In February 2023 the Farm Safety Foundation Charity published research suggested that 94% of UK farmers under the age of 40 rank poor mental health as the biggest hidden problem facing farmers today – a rise of 10% since 2018.
- 2.2 The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution's (RABI) Big Farming Survey conducted in 2021 revealed that 36% of farmers in the UK are probably depressed, while 47% are constantly struggling with anxiety. Moreover, of the 15,000 respondents involved in the survey, only 8% of women and 12% of men reported having good mental well-being.
- 2.3 Sadly, and according to the Office of National Statistics, there were 36 suicides recorded in England and Wales among those working in the farming and agricultural industry in 2021.

# Agenda Item 8

- 2.4 Fortunately, the crisis is being recognised by the industry and much work is being done to improve awareness within professionals such as vets who work closely with the farming community and to promote the problem, remove stigma, and encourage farmers to talk.
- 2.5 In October 2023 Adam Henson partnered with Team Doctor to create the 'Keeping on Track' podcast series, which aims to erase the stigma around mental health in farming and raise awareness of the challenges those in the rural profession face.
- 2.6 The Farming Charity 'yellow wellies' has now published its fifth edition of its 'Mind Your Head' Booklet which provides a wide range of general guidance, advice and signposting. A copy of the booklet is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.5 There are also a number of national charities that are able to support the farming community with 24 hour helplines. Some of those Charities are listed below:

## National Contacts:

- Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) Helpline – 0800 188 4444; website: [www.rabi.org.uk](http://www.rabi.org.uk); and email: [help@rabi.org.uk](mailto:help@rabi.org.uk)
- Farm Safety Foundation (Yellow Wellies) website: [www.yellowwellies.org](http://www.yellowwellies.org) and email: [farm\\_safety\\_foundation@nfumutual.co.uk](mailto:farm_safety_foundation@nfumutual.co.uk)
- Farming Community Network (FCN) Helpline – 03000 111 999; website: [www.fcn.org.uk](http://www.fcn.org.uk); and email: [help@fcn.org.uk](mailto:help@fcn.org.uk)
- Addington Fund website: [www.addingtonfund.org.uk](http://www.addingtonfund.org.uk); and email: [enquiries@addingtonfund.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@addingtonfund.org.uk)
- You Are Not Alone (YANA) – Helpline: 0300 323 0400; website: [www.yanahelp.org](http://www.yanahelp.org); email: [helpline@yanahelp.org](mailto:helpline@yanahelp.org)
- Perennial – website: [www.perennial.org.uk](http://www.perennial.org.uk); and email: [info@perennial.org.uk](mailto:info@perennial.org.uk)
- Samaritans – 116 123
- NHS Emergency – 999
- Papyrus HOPELINEUK – 0800 068 4141

## Local Contacts:

- Dartmoor Hill Farm Project – website [www.dartmoorhillfarmproject.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorhillfarmproject.co.uk) and email: [hfp@dartmoor.gov.uk](mailto:hfp@dartmoor.gov.uk)
- Exmoor Hill Farming Network CIC – website – [www.ehfn.org.uk](http://www.ehfn.org.uk); and email [Katherine@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:Katherine@ehfn.org.uk)

## 3) Best Practice Exemplar in the Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Sector

- 3.1 In September 2023, the Duchy of Cornwall launched its 'Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service' as part of its Mental Health Strategy. Attached at Appendix 2 is a copy of the leaflet sent to all tenants.

3.2 Following the launch of the service, the Duchy's Rural Director, Matthew Morris, was contacted to gain a better understanding of the Strategy. Mr Morris kindly shared a copy of the Duchy's Mental Health Strategy on which much of this report is now based.

3.3 It is encouraging to see that His Royal Highness Prince William has placed mental health as a key objective for his time as Duke and for the Duchy of Cornwall to be the leading provider of mental health support to tenants and staff.

3.4 The key objectives of the strategy are:

- To ensure that the Duchy is an exemplar Estate, providing its tenants and its staff with the best resource it has at its disposal.
- For its tenants and staff to have access to a range of advice which is accessible in person, on the telephone and online.
- To build resilience and remove the stigma of talking about mental health.
- To be able to spot trends and to tailor advice on offer. Their farmers will be able to talk to someone who knows one end of a cow from another.
- Ensure that they make an active difference. They will host events and bring people together.

3.5 With a wider portfolio of tenants - from farmers to commercial business tenants to residential tenants, they have invested in and are delivering a range of services for its diverse tenants, as well as its staff.

3.6 A major part of the support offering includes:

- The delivery of the Tenants Assistance Programme providing a wide range of advice including access to trained counsellors, financial advice, and a range of wellbeing information.
- Direct links to farming specific assistance working alongside established 'farming help' charities.
- Training and support for 'front-line' staff including land agents & building surveyors.
- Establishing a network of mental health first aiders within the organisation.

3.7 The Duchy of Cornwall staff have been provided with training and mental resilience workshops and have access to an Employee Assistance Programme (provided by Health Assurance).

3.8 For their farm tenants they have hosted popular group events, albeit without a specific mental health focus. The events were in the form of 'pasty and pint nights' which proved popular and an excellent opportunity to get together in an informal setting and emphasising the importance of non-agenda meetings. They also intend building on Focus farm events and holding farm get togethers.

3.9 As part of the Tenant Support and Wellbeing Programme it is providing a bespoke service for its farm tenants ensuring they have access to agricultural advice via:

- A link to Duchy sponsored Farm Community Network (FCN) bespoke service including offering mental health resilience training

# Agenda Item 8

- Additional signposting to 'We Are Farming Minds' and RABI
- Link to Duchy Future Farming information.
- Offer of targeted farm business advice (in conjunction with Andersons/KMT consulting)

## 4) Options / Alternatives

- 4.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

## 5) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data

- 5.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.
- 5.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations have been received
- 5.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

## 6) Strategic Plan

- 6.1 This report has a direct alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

*Improving health and wellbeing - improve mental health by improving access to mental health and wellbeing services and strengthening support for young people at risk of emotional or mental health problems*

## 7) Financial Considerations

- 7.1 The Author is not aware of any financial issues arising from this report.

## 8) Legal Considerations

- 8.1 The Author is not aware of any legal issues arising from this report.

## 9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

- 9.1 The Author is not aware of any environmental impact (including climate change) issues arising from this report.



## 10) Equality Considerations

10.1 The Author is not aware of any equality issues arising from this report.

## 11) Risk Management Considerations

11.1 No risks have been identified.

## 12) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations

12.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Matthew Jones,  
Director of Transformation and Business Services

**Electoral Divisions:** All

## Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper

Date

File Reference

Nil

### Contact for enquiries:

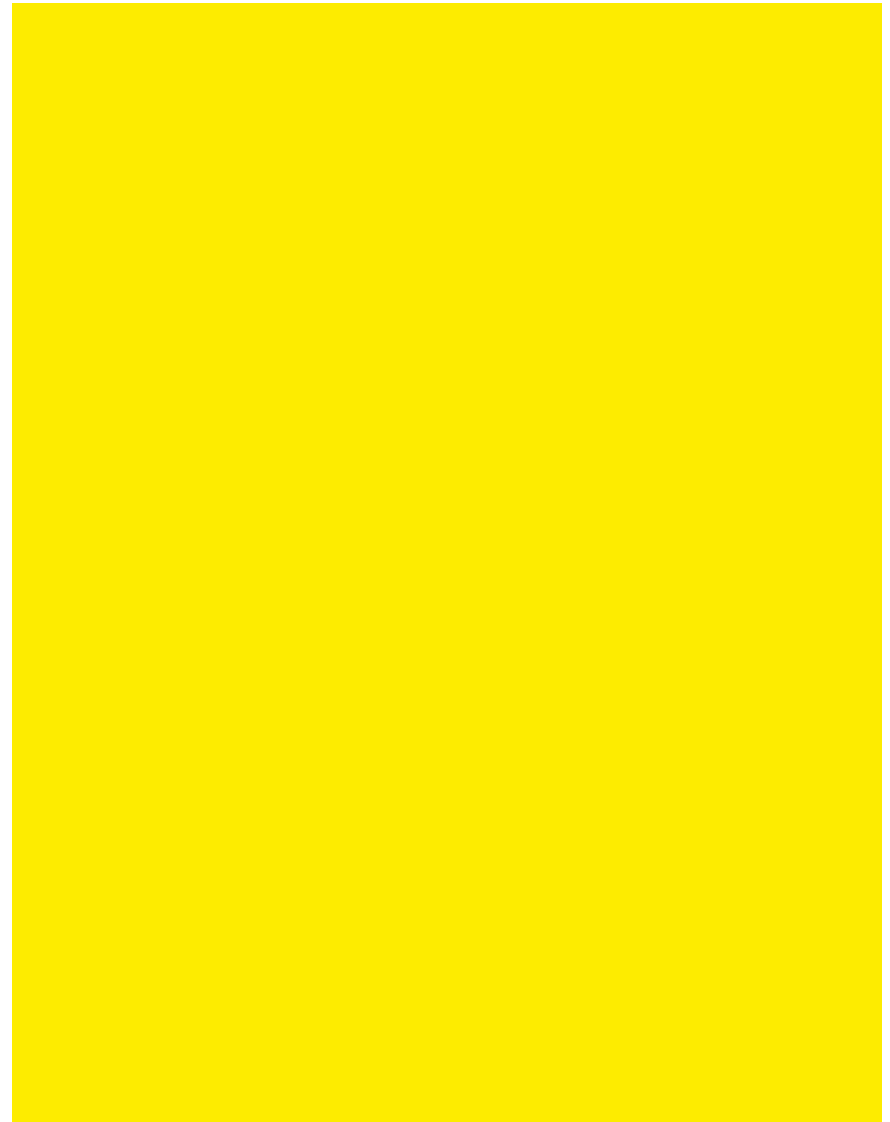
Name: Dan Meek, Director of Estates & Valuation, South West Norse, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW

Contact: 01392 351066 or [dan.meek@norsegroup.co.uk](mailto:dan.meek@norsegroup.co.uk)



# THE LITTLE BOOK OF MINDING YOUR HEAD

FIFTH EDITION





## CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Foreword                                | 4  |
| What do we mean by mental health?       | 6  |
| What is mental ill health?              | 10 |
| A (Meno) Pause for thought              | 17 |
| Triggers and signs of mental ill health | 28 |
| What is stress and why does it matter?  | 36 |
| Tips for coping with stress             | 38 |
| Fill Your Boot                          | 40 |
| What is depression?                     | 44 |
| Starting a conversation                 | 48 |
| Sources of help                         | 54 |

## FOREWORD

**FROM STEPHANIE BERKELEY,  
MANAGER, FARM SAFETY FOUNDATION**

### **THANK YOU FOR PICKING UP THIS LITTLE BOOK OF MINDING YOUR HEAD.**

For whatever reason you have been drawn to this book – for yourself, or for someone you live or work with – I hope you will find some guidance and support within its pages.

Our farming industry has experienced turbulent times over the past few years - extreme weather conditions, poor harvests, supply chain shortages and a global pandemic to contend with but, through it all, farming endured as it always does.

The UK's farmers are a remarkable breed; adaptable, resilient, and incredibly hardworking. Their efforts put food on our plates, produced to some of the highest standards in the world, and their careful stewardship knits together the environmental and social fabric of our beautiful landscape. But this commitment is coming at a price...

A shocking 94% of farmers under the age of 40 rate poor mental health as the biggest hidden problem faced today according to our latest research. And, in an industry



that continues to have the poorest safety record of any occupation in the UK, making sure we are all looking after our physical and mental wellbeing has become even more important.

This book has been written to offer support and guidance for those who may be struggling with the pressures of farming or recognise that struggle in someone else. Where possible, we have kept it simple and in Plain English but sometimes, the issue is more complex and requires complex language.

#### **A note on language**

Many different terms are used to describe people's experiences of mental ill health such as 'mental health problems', 'mental health issues' and 'poor mental health'. We recognise that different people will feel certain phrases helpful, whilst others will feel they have negative connotations. In an attempt to represent the broad spectrum of people experiencing mental health problems, we have used different terms interchangeably throughout this book. This is in line with guidance from the mental health charity Mind. We keep our use of language under review and welcome feedback for improvement.

## **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MENTAL HEALTH?**

**There is a lot of chat about “mental health” in the press and media, especially after the past few years, but what do we really know about it and how does it apply to us?**

Take this example – you hurt your ankle in a five-a-side football match and you're on the bench for a few games... your friends will ask you about it and if you're getting better and you'll probably be happy enough to talk about it.

Now, what about a period of time when you've felt particularly low? You're worried about your finances, your family and the farm and you feel like you're drowning... would you share your feelings or would you hide them because you're worried about what others might say or think about you?

The fact is that we all have 'mental health' just like we have 'physical health' and it can vary from day to day. Issues can appear as a result of experiences in both our personal and working lives – or they can just happen.



It's not surprising that, according to the charity Mind, a third of adults and young people say their mental health has gotten much worse since March 2020.

### **So why aren't we talking about it more?**

Well, stigma and discrimination are two reasons - it takes courage to talk about something so personal. There is always the risk of oversharing or making others feel uncomfortable. This is particularly the case when talking about mental health.

This stigma also means that many people have a limited understanding of mental health. They don't understand it so they don't want to know anything about it.

### **Mental health issues do not discriminate.**

They can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, geography, income, social status, sexual orientation or other aspect of cultural identity. We need to encourage a culture in farming that promotes positive mental health, prevents people from experiencing mental ill health and helps them better manage mental health problems.

One of the ways to do this is to take notice – of yourself and those you live and work with. Reach out to someone you think may be struggling. It's often the everyday things that make a difference – like asking someone how they are or sending a text. They might want to talk about it, they might not. But just letting them know you're happy to talk is important



## WHAT IS MENTAL ILL HEALTH?

**One of the biggest challenges we face is the need to make conversations about mental health more common. A good starting point for this is to learn more about mental ill health.**

There are different types of mental illnesses, some of which are common, such as depression and anxiety disorders, and some that are not so common such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

According to [time-to-change.org.uk](http://time-to-change.org.uk), there are a number of different types of mental health problems, and they each have a different impact on those who experience them, as well as on families and friends. Learning a few things about mental health problems might help you to feel more confident about talking and listening.

**Anxiety & panic attacks** - Anxiety is a normal emotion that we all experience but it can become a mental health problem when someone finds they are feeling this way all, or most of the time.



Panic attacks happen when your body experiences a rush of intense psychological (mental) and physical symptoms. You may feel an overwhelming sense of fear, apprehension, and anxiety. You may also have physical symptoms such as: nausea, sweating, trembling, a sensation that your heart is beating irregularly (palpitations) and even temporary paralysis. With counselling and support you can live and cope with these issues.

**Bipolar disorder** - Bipolar disorder (which used to be called manic depression) is a particular type of depression where the person has extreme mood swings, experiencing periods of low (depressed) and high (manic) moods.

A proper diagnosis of Bipolar disorder can take a long time because the person will need to have episodes of both depression and mania. Bipolar disorder is less common than ordinary depression and does require medical treatment

**Depression** - Depression is a diagnosis given to someone who is experiencing a low mood and finds it hard or impossible to have fun or enjoy their lives. As this affects 280 million people in the world we will explore this in more detail in a separate section.

**Eating disorders** - An eating disorder is a diagnosis given to someone who has unhealthy thoughts, feelings and behaviours about food and their body shape. The term covers a wide range of problems including starving (anorexia), bingeing and purging (bulimia) and binge eating. The reasons and causes behind eating disorders are varied and complex and medical help should always be sought.

**Obsessive-compulsive disorder** - This term is often used to refer to someone who likes things tidy and organised but we need to stop misusing the term as this is a serious and distressing medical condition.





OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) is a mental health diagnosis given to someone who experiences obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours. It can be distressing and significantly interfere with everyday life, but treatment can help keep it under control.

**Personality disorders** - A personality disorder is a type of mental disorder in which you have a rigid and unhealthy pattern of thinking, functioning and behaving. A person with a personality disorder has trouble perceiving and relating to situations and people. This can cause significant problems and limitations in relationships, social activities, work and school. In some cases, the person may not realise that they have a personality disorder because their way of thinking and behaving seems natural to them. They may blame others for the challenges they face. Diagnosis must be left to a psychiatrist.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** - PTSD is a diagnosis given to people who develop a certain set of symptoms following a traumatic event in their lives.

Symptoms include:

- Reliving the event through flashbacks, intrusive thoughts or nightmares.
- Constantly feeling on edge and alert, experiencing high anxiety or panic attacks.
- Avoiding feelings or memories of the event through keeping busy or avoiding talking about the event.
- Not being able to remember the event, through dissociation or feeling physically or emotionally numb.

PTSD can begin immediately after the traumatic event has happened, or it might begin weeks, months or years later.

**Psychosis** - Again, this is one of those terms that can be misused in everyday life which is very unfair as this is a seriously distressing condition. The person experiencing psychosis perceives the world in a different way to those around them, including hallucinations, delusions or both.



By definition, psychosis involves the person losing touch with commonly accepted reality, though the extent of this may vary.

**Schizophrenia** - Contrary to popular belief, schizophrenia has nothing to do with 'split personality'. It is a serious mental disorder in which people interpret reality abnormally. Schizophrenia may result in some combination of hallucinations, delusions, and extremely disordered thinking and behaviour that impair daily functioning and can be disabling. People with schizophrenia require lifelong treatment although early treatment can help get symptoms under control before serious complications develop and may help improve the long-term outlook.

**Self-harm** - Self-harm is the act of deliberately harming your own body, such as cutting or burning yourself. It is typically not meant as a suicide attempt but a harmful way to cope with emotional pain, anger and frustration. Self-harming may bring a momentary sense of calm and a release of tension but is usually followed by guilt and shame and the return of painful emotions.





## A (MENO) PAUSE FOR THOUGHT...

**Menopause is not a sign of old age and it's not an illness but, for far too long, there has been a shroud of embarrassment, shame and fear around the topic of menopause as that of mental ill health!**

Menopause refers to the time when you stop having periods and can no longer get pregnant naturally. It happens because the ovaries stop producing eggs and, as a result, levels of the hormones they produce (oestrogen, progesterone and testosterone) fall.

Every woman's experience of the menopause will be different but changing hormones can affect physical, emotional and mental health.

Approaching middle age often brings increased stress, anxiety and fear. This can partially be attributed to physical changes and decreasing levels of estrogen and progesterone which can cause temporary mood changes, including symptoms of depression as well as hot flashes, sweating and other symptoms.

The average age of menopause for women in the UK is 51, but there's a lot of variation, so menopause may happen sooner or later than this.

For most women, the menopause doesn't happen overnight. This is because, unless there has been a surgical menopause where the womb has been removed (Hysterectomy), the ovaries don't suddenly stop working. What happens is that they gradually slow down over a period of time as part of the natural menopause. This transition period is called the perimenopause, and can last for a few months or years – the average is around four years.

Research by Harvard Medical School suggests that the vast majority of women who develop significant mood issues during perimenopause have had them in the past. It's relatively rare for someone with no history of depression or anxiety to suddenly develop a severe case of it at menopause.



For some women, menopause may be a time of isolation or frustration. Family and friends may not always understand what you're going through or give you the support you need.

In addition, midlife - when menopause occurs - is a time when women sometimes face multiple sources of stress, including caring for children, dealing with aging parents, and navigating life changes, all of which may contribute to the incidence of depression and anxiety at this age.



### **So, what can you do to protect your mental health as you go through menopause?**

- Be aware that mood changes may accompany other menopausal symptoms.
- Monitor your mood and take note of patterns in other factors such as sleep and stress levels. Seek professional help if symptoms become severe and interfere with daily life.
- Make lifestyle changes such as increasing exercise, getting adequate sleep, and controlling stress to reduce potential symptoms.
- Know that it's temporary. Typically, the mood changes that accompany the hormonal changes during the menopausal transition won't last.
- Reach out to others.



With the support of personalities like Davina McCall speaking openly about menopause, hopefully times are changing and we will start to see that menopause stigma is unjustified, and there's no reason to accept it as a given. We know the problems can't be erased overnight, but we can begin to change our own outlook right away.

To learn more about menopause please visit: [themenopausecharity.org](http://themenopausecharity.org) or [nhs.uk/conditions/menopause](http://nhs.uk/conditions/menopause)



## SUICIDAL FEELINGS

**Suicide is a tragic reaction to stressful life situations and, all the more tragic because it can be prevented.**

Whether you're considering suicide or know someone who may have suicidal thoughts, suicidal ideation or suicidal feelings, learn about the warning signs and how to reach out for immediate help and professional treatment.

**You may save a life - your own or someone else's.**

It may seem like there's no way to solve your problems and that suicide is the only way to end the pain. But you can take steps to stay safe - and start enjoying your life again.



These warning signs or suicidal thoughts include:

- talking about suicide - for example, making statements such as “I’m going to kill myself,” “I wish I were dead” or “I wish I hadn’t been born”
- withdrawing from social contact and wanting to be left alone
- acting recklessly.
- sleeping too much or too little.
- having mood swings, such as being emotionally high one day and deeply discouraged the next
- having more problems with work or studies.
- becoming anxious, irritable, or confrontational.



However, some signs that an attempted suicide is likely or imminent include:

- getting the means to take your own life, such as buying a gun or stockpiling pills
- threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- giving away belongings or getting affairs in order when there’s no other logical explanation for doing this
- saying goodbye to people as if they won’t be seeing them again
- talking or writing about death, dying or suicide.

Warning signs aren’t always obvious, and they may vary from person to person. Some people make their intentions clear, while others keep suicidal thoughts and feelings secret.

At this point, according to Mental Health First Aid England, there are certain steps that you should take to support the person who feels suicidal...



1. Ensure your own personal safety
2. Ensure the person is not left alone if the risk is high - Help them stay safe
3. Seek immediate help

If you, or someone you are with, feel overwhelmed by thoughts of not wanting to live or having urges to attempt suicide, get help NOW. Call a suicide hotline:

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Samaritans</b>         | <b>116 123</b>       |
| <b>NHS Emergency</b>      | <b>999</b>           |
| <b>Papyrus HOPELINEUK</b> | <b>0800 068 4141</b> |

4. Discourage further drug/alcohol use
5. If you can, get rid of any items from their home that the person could use to make suicidal actions. Keep them away from places that could pose a danger to them, too.

6. Encourage the person to talk - Ask them: “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” As hard as it is to ask this, experts say doing so will not make anyone think about suicide more. In fact, it signals that you’ve noticed and that you care and are ready to talk with them about it.
7. Consider helping them to create a support plan and stay in touch. Check in with them often after you talk. Let them know you’re there for them when they need you.

**REMEMBER – confidentiality does not apply when someone is at risk of suicide.**

You must never agree to keep a plan for suicide or risk of suicide a secret.



If they ask or warn you not to tell anyone about their suicidal thoughts, you must not agree and explain why e.g. I care too much to keep a secret like this.

Keep in mind that it is better for that person to be angry at you for sharing their suicidal thoughts without their permission so they can get help, than to lose them to suicide.



## TRIGGERS AND SIGNS OF MENTAL ILL HEALTH

**Farming is the industry with the poorest safety record of any occupation in the UK and stress is often a key factor in many of the incidents, injuries and illnesses taking place on our farms.**

Stress is something that many farmers face at some point and is an important contributor to mental ill health. It can come from many sources such as weather, financial issues, international trade agreements, politics, rural crime and rural isolation.

We all have mental health just as we have physical health, but it can be more difficult to spot the signs of mental ill health. Mental Health First Aid England have outlined some of the common triggers which might impact on someone's mental health and the signs that suggest they may need support.







## Triggers

People often undergo significant life changes without developing a mental health issue. But for some people, changes in their work or personal life, including happy events, can prove stressful and may trigger mental ill health. There are lots of reasons why someone may find it hard to cope. As well as the stressors we've looked at, there can be other factors which include:

### Personal life changes

- Life-changing injury
- Health scares or physical illness
- Bereavement
- Breakdown of a relationship
- Having children

### Changes at work

- Starting a new job or tenancy
- Increased workload
- Poor relationships with workmates or supervisor
- Redundancy, or fear of redundancy
- Uncertainty with weather or market conditions





Add to this the stresses faced by everyone in daily life such as:

**Physical Stress** - Late nights, binge drinking, drug misuse, poor diet, lack of exercise and illness.

**Emotional Stress** - Relationship problems, peer pressure, leaving home, high expressed emotion within the family home.

**Environmental Stress** - Poor housing, unemployment, new environments to adjust to such as moving house.

## Signs

Many people believe that poor mental health is rare and “happens to someone else.” It isn’t and it doesn’t.

Although everyone’s signs are individual to them, it is good to be aware of subtle or significant physical,

behavioural or personality changes in yourself, those you work, or live with, and remain alert to someone who may need your help...

Some of the signs to look out for include:

### Physical

- Frequent headaches or stomach upsets
- Suffering from frequent minor illnesses
- Difficulty sleeping or constant tiredness
- Being run down
- Lack of care over appearance
- Sudden weight loss or gain

### Emotional and behavioural

- Irritability, aggression or tearfulness
- Being withdrawn, not participating in conversations or social activities
- Increased aggression, arguments or conflict with others



- Increased consumption of caffeine, alcohol, cigarettes or sedatives
- Indecision, inability to concentrate
- Erratic or socially unacceptable behaviour
- Being louder or more exuberant than usual
- Loss of confidence
- Difficulty remembering things
- Loss of sense of humour

**At work**

- Increased mistakes, missing deadlines or forgetting tasks
- Taking on too much work and volunteering for every new job
- Someone who is normally on time arriving late
- Working too many hours: first in, last out
- Increased sickness absence
- Negative changes to ways of communicating or socialising with colleagues

**Maybe you can't quite put your finger on it, but you know something is not quite right, what can you do?**

If you notice one or more of these behaviours, do not make any assumptions about what mental health concerns they may have. You can check in with them, let them know you have noticed and let them know that you are there for them if they want to talk.

The earlier a problem is tackled the less impact it will have. If you, or someone you work with is having problems, encourage them to talk to someone, whether it's their partner, farm manager, vet, NFU Mutual agent or local GP.



## WHAT IS STRESS AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

**Did you know that the law requires all employers to prevent work-related stress and support good mental health at work? This includes farming.**

Work-related stress is a major cause of occupational ill health in farming, and it can mean severe physical and psychological conditions for farm workers. It can also lead to poor productivity, high staff turnover and increases in incidents in an industry with the poorest safety record of any occupation in the UK.

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Working Minds campaign aims to support those working in the industry to prevent stress and support good mental health at work.



**Many workers feel stress when they can't cope with the pressures of farming.**

For example, they can get stressed if they feel they don't have the skills or time to meet tight deadlines. Many farmers find themselves in this situation. Planning, training and support can sometimes reduce pressure and bring stress levels down.

We all know that stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether someone can cope.

The HSE Working Minds campaign offers a range of tools and support to help farmers and farm workers understand the best ways to prevent work related stress and encourage good mental health.

**To learn more visit [Working Minds - Work Right to keep Britain safe](#)**

## TOP TIPS FOR COPING WITH STRESS

**TALK ABOUT IT:** Talk to friends, family and workmates. You can also join farming forums and Facebook groups to chat to other farmers. They may have useful advice or experience and be able to provide support.

**TAKE A BREAK:** It's difficult to relax while on a farm as there is always plenty to do. Try to schedule regular breaks where you actually leave the farm for a period of time (anything from a few hours to a weekend away). A short time away can help you come back with a fresh perspective.





**LOOK AFTER YOURSELF:** Stress can take a physical toll so it's important that you eat a healthy diet, do some physical exercise and ensure you have a good night's sleep. Making time to take care of yourself will help you stay strong in the face of stress.

**RELAX:** There are a variety of ways in which you can relax – you might like to read a book, go for a walk or watch your favourite TV show. Try to find time to relax each day, even if it's just for 15 minutes.

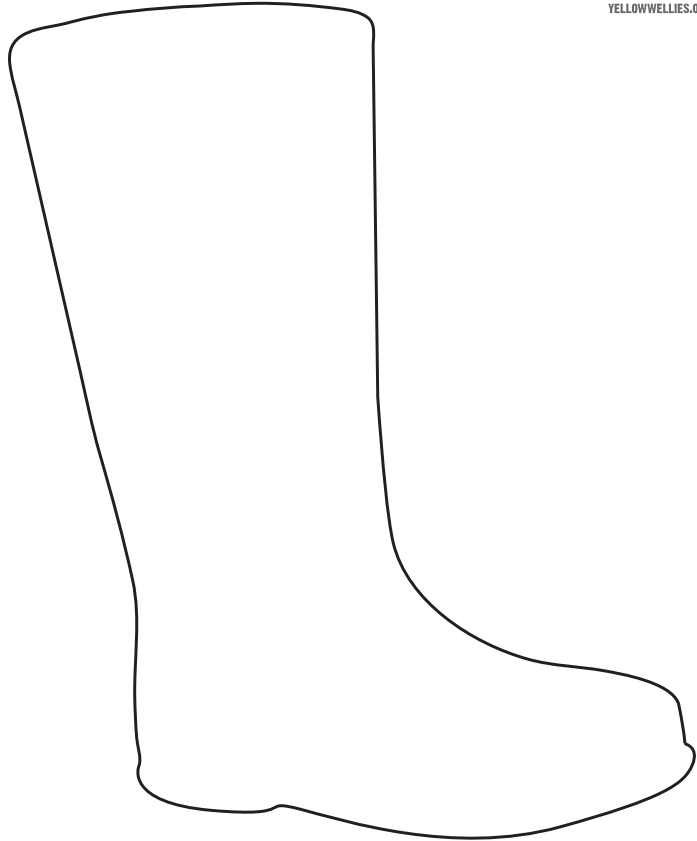


## FILL YOUR BOOT...

**If you, or someone you work or live with, is feeling overwhelmed by the stresses of everyday life, this can be a handy tool to use to explore the things that are concerning, worrying or causing you to feel down or apprehensive.**

Using the space inside, literally fill the boot with all the worrying thoughts you have inside your head. No matter how big or small, try to include everything from your work, home life and the world at large that is causing you stress right now.

When you feel that you've noted everything, leave it for a while and take a break. After a short time, come back, take a look at the list again – add more if you want to - and start to separate what you've written into things you can personally control and things that you have no control or influence over...



## NOW ASK YOURSELF...

1. What can I control?

2. What is out of my control so I need to accept?

3. What needs my attention right now?



4. Who can help me? Who can I talk to?

5. How do I deal with things in a negative way?  
(keeping it to myself, self-medicating with drugs or alcohol,  
not getting enough sleep)

6. How do I deal with things in a positive way?  
(asking for help, making time for positive experiences,  
getting enough rest)

## WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

**Everyone can feel sad or down when bad things happen, however sadness is not the same as depression.**

People who are feeling a little 'down' may have a short-term depressed mood but they can manage to cope and soon recover without needing treatment. The type of depression that does require treatment and there is no quick fix for is 'clinical depression'. Please Note - You should never try to diagnose someone with depression. This is a medical condition and can only be diagnosed by a medical professional.

### What does it look like?

It doesn't look the same in everyone however, someone who is 'clinically depressed' will experience at least two of these three symptoms most of the day, every day for more than two weeks:



1. Continuous low mood or sadness that does not go away
  2. Not getting any enjoyment out of life
  3. Lack of energy and prolonged tiredness
- Other symptoms include:
4. Loss of confidence / low self esteem
  5. Feeling guilt-ridden
  6. Suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming yourself
  7. Difficulty in concentrating and making decisions
  8. Moving or speaking more slowly than usual and unable to settle
  9. Having difficulty sleeping / sleeping too much
  10. Loss of appetite / overeating leading to weight loss / gain

Not everyone who experiences depression has all these symptoms so the following is a good guide to severity of depression...

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Mild Depression</b>     | 4 of the 10 symptoms experienced over the past two weeks and has some impact on your daily life                   |
| <b>Moderate Depression</b> | 6 of the 10 symptoms experienced over the past two weeks and has significant impact on your daily life            |
| <b>Severe Depression</b>   | 8 of the 10 symptoms experienced over the past two weeks and make it almost impossible to get through daily life. |



## What does it sound like?

Someone experiencing depression will tend to have a negative view of themselves, the world and the future.

Things you may hear them say:

- I'm useless
- It's all my fault
- I'm worthless
- No-one loves me
- Things are never going to get any better
- I've let everyone down
- Life sucks

Being aware of what to look and listen out for can allow you to address the issue at an early stage and guide yourself, or the person you are concerned about, to the right support.

## START A CONVERSATION...

### You've seen the signs so what happens now?

It's often the everyday things that make a difference – like asking someone how they are or sending a text. If you think someone is having a tough time, don't be afraid to reach out. They might want to talk about it, they might not.

But just letting them know you're happy to talk is important.

We don't often talk about our mental health so it might seem a little daunting to start a conversation about it but it's important to remember you don't have to be an expert.

Mental Health First Aid England has put together some ideas for how you can start the conversation.



### **Choose where to have the chat**

- Send a text, make a call or make them a hot drink. It's a great way to ask someone a quick 'how are you?' and start a conversation.
- Meeting in a location away from the farm in a neutral space such as a café or pub might feel less intimidating.
- Give yourself plenty of time so you don't appear to be in a hurry – Ten minutes may be enough but, if you need longer, then allow yourself the time.
- Give them your full attention – keep the focus on them and switch your phone off or on 'silent'.

### **Talking tips**

- Keep the conversation positive and explore the issues, thank them for sharing with you and look interested.
- Keep your body language open and non-confrontational.
- Be empathetic, try not to judge and just listen - this is a serious issue so do not say things like "pull yourself together" or "cheer up" – this could make them feel foolish and clam up and will mean they are less likely to share with anyone else.

Useful questions to ask – Open questions invite the person to share more so they can't answer with a simple 'yes' or 'no'

- “How are you feeling at the moment?”
- “How long have you felt like this?”
- “Tell me how work is adding to this?”
- “What can we do to help?”

### **How to listen**

- Don't wade in with your thoughts and opinions. Let them talk and LISTEN.
- Focus on their words, tone of voice and body language – all of these will give clues as to how they are really feeling.
- Don't judge. Respect the person's feelings, experiences and values although they may be different from yours.
- See it from their side. Put yourself in the other person's shoes and show them that you hear and understand what they are saying and feeling.
- Be genuine – show that you accept the person and their values by what you say and do.





### What happens next?

- Keep the conversation going – follow up and ask them how they are doing. Reassure them that your door is always open and mean it. It's particularly important to stay in touch with any workers who are off sick.
- Reassure them that help is available so no matter how they want that support – face-to-face, by phone or online – there are farming charities and rural support groups across the UK that can help. The next section highlights many of those organisations and how to contact them.
- Remember, you are not an expert and you will have limited knowledge so it can also be appropriate to encourage the person to visit their GP or seek expert help.

## SOURCES OF HELP

**Creating awareness and understanding of the issue of poor mental health is important but it is also important to know who to turn to if you - or someone you know - is struggling with their mental health.**

In the UK, we are lucky to have a wide range of charities and farm & rural support groups working in this area and this section contains the details of some national and regional charities and support groups that you can call on in times of need.

*Special thanks must go to Melinda Raker, Patron of YANA and to the Prince's Countryside Fund for their work in helping us bring this section together.*



## What if they're not okay?

If you, or someone you are with, feels overwhelmed by thoughts of not wanting to live or having urges to attempt suicide, seek help NOW

**Call a suicide hotline:**

**Samaritans 116 123**  
(available 24/7)

**NHS Emergency 999**  
(available 24/7)

**Papyrus HOPELINEUK 0800 068 4141**  
(available 9am–midnight)

## National

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### Rural Support

**0800 138 1678** Available Mon - Fri 9am – 9pm

**[www.ruralsupport.org.uk](http://www.ruralsupport.org.uk)**

**[info@ruralsupport.org.uk](mailto:info@ruralsupport.org.uk)**

Rural Support provides impartial guidance for farmers and farm family members in Northern Ireland to support their farm business and personal wellbeing. A support line provides a listening and signposting service for farmers and farming families and the charity also provides programmes, mentoring, and advice on a wide range of issues including financial issues, mental health concerns and succession planning.



## SCOTLAND

### RSABI

**0808 1234 555** Available 24/7

**www.rsabi.org.uk | rsabi@rsabi.org.uk**

RSABI provides emotional, practical and financial support to individuals and their families across the agricultural sector in Scotland including farming and crofting. The RSABI helpline is available 24/7 with webchat also available via the website - also 24/7.

## WALES

### The DPJ Foundation

**0800 587 4262** Available 24/7

**www.thedpjfoundation.co.uk**

**admin@thedpjfoundation.co.uk**

The DPJ Foundation provides support to those who work in the agricultural sector with a 24hr call line for support and access to fully funded counselling across Wales.

### Tir Dewi

**0800 121 4722** Available 24/7

**www.tirdewi.co.uk**

**mail@tirdewi.co.uk**

Tir Dewi's volunteers work with farmers and their families to help make sense of problems, provide practical support and solutions and partner with other organisations where it would be helpful. A Freephone Helpline is available and volunteers can visit farms to spend time getting to understand the issues and provide the support needed.



## ENGLAND & WALES

### Addington Fund

**01926 620135** Available Mon - Fri 9am – 5pm  
[www.addingtonfund.org.uk](http://www.addingtonfund.org.uk)  
[enquiries@addingtonfund.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@addingtonfund.org.uk)

Addington Fund can provide a home for farming families living in England & Wales who have to leave the industry, through no fault of their own and, by doing so, will lose their home. They may also award emergency grants towards certain business costs in times of emergency and where hardship prevails.

### FCN The Farming Community Network

**03000 111 999** Available daily 7am -11pm  
[www.fcn.org.uk](http://www.fcn.org.uk) | [www.farmwell.org.uk](http://www.farmwell.org.uk)  
[help@fcn.org.uk](mailto:help@fcn.org.uk)

FCN provides practical and pastoral support to farmers and their families through difficult times. Established in 1995, their national helpline provides free, confidential support to anyone who seeks help and their website contains some valuable resources to improve farming resilience.

### RABI - Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution

**0800 188 4444** Available 24/7  
[www.rabi.org.uk](http://www.rabi.org.uk) | [help@rabi.org.uk](mailto:help@rabi.org.uk)

RABI offer practical, financial, and emotional support to farming people. Among the many professional services offered, RABI provide counselling support, mental health training and an online mental wellbeing service.





## UK-WIDE

### Farm Safety Foundation (Yellow Wellies)

[www.yellowwellies.org](http://www.yellowwellies.org)

[farm\\_safety\\_foundation@nfumutual.co.uk](mailto:farm_safety_foundation@nfumutual.co.uk)

Established in 2014 by NFU Mutual, the Farm Safety Foundation or Yellow Wellies as many know us, is an independent registered charity (1159000) set up to raise awareness of farm safety and mental health among young farmers aged 16-40 across the UK.

The charity has developed this booklet, mental health in farming training and the young farmer Minding Your Head curve module offered by NFYFC.

Contact NFYFC to learn more  
[Natasha.Dennis@nfyfc.org.uk](mailto:Natasha.Dennis@nfyfc.org.uk)

### Perennial

0800 093 8543 Mon-Fri 9.30am-4pm

[www.perennial.org.uk](http://www.perennial.org.uk) | [info@perennial.org.uk](mailto:info@perennial.org.uk)

Perennial is the UK's only charity dedicated to helping everyone who works in horticulture, and their families, when times get tough. Perennial provides free and confidential advice, information and support to people working in, or retired from horticulture and their families.

### The Gamekeepers' Welfare Trust

0300 1233088 Available 24/7

[www.thegamekeeperswelfaretrust.com](http://www.thegamekeeperswelfaretrust.com)

[enquiries@thegamekeeperswelfaretrust.com](mailto:enquiries@thegamekeeperswelfaretrust.com)

Jamie's helpline offer support for a wide range of issues including health, retirement, redundancy, housing and employment but they are first and foremost a confidential listening service. Gamekeepers, stalkers and ghillies and their families can benefit from a wide variety of financial grants in times of hardship, ill health and retirement as well as educational grants for young people.



## REGIONAL

Where possible, we have highlighted the availability of volunteers / staff to answer calls however, outside these times, several of the national charities are available 24/7.

**In case of an emergency, and when a life is at risk, call 999 or Samaritans on 116 123**

## CHESHIRE & WIRRAL

### Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy

07967 559594 Available 24/7

[www.agchap.com](http://www.agchap.com) | [talk@agchap.com](mailto:talk@agchap.com)

Cheshire Ag Chap offer pastoral support to the farming community using supporting agencies when required. Team members visit individual farms, livestock markets, agricultural shows and church services.

## CORNWALL

### FarmCornwall

01736 367589

[mail@farmcornwall.co.uk](mailto:mail@farmcornwall.co.uk)

Established in 2001 by landowners and farmers to support small farmers FarmCornwall offers independent technical advice, particularly finance, debt and family mediation. They also advise farmers entering Countryside Stewardship schemes and complete claims for financial support.

### Farming Health Hub

01736 367589 / 07775 667825

[www.farminghealth.co.uk](http://www.farminghealth.co.uk)

[jon@farminghealth.co.uk](mailto:jon@farminghealth.co.uk)

The Farming Health Hub provides confidential advice around Physical Health, Mental Health and Business Health to farmers and their families in their day-to-day lives.



## CUMBRIA

### The Farmer Network

01768 868615 Available Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm  
[www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk](http://www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk)  
[info@thefarmernetwork.co.uk](mailto:info@thefarmernetwork.co.uk)

The Farmer Network is an independent, “not for profit” organisation providing help and support to farmers, their families and businesses across Cumbria and The Yorkshire Dales.

## DERBYSHIRE

### Derbyshire Rural Chaplaincy

07710 088972  
[www.derbyshireruralchaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.derbyshireruralchaplaincy.org.uk)  
[alan@derbyshireruralchaplaincy.org.uk](mailto:alan@derbyshireruralchaplaincy.org.uk)

The Derbyshire Rural Chaplaincy provides confidential practical and pastoral support to farmers, young farmers, and farming families in Derbyshire.

## The Farming Life Centre

01692 810903 not a helpline  
[www.thefarminglifecentre.org.uk](http://www.thefarminglifecentre.org.uk)  
[info@thefarminglifecentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thefarminglifecentre.org.uk)

A farming charity supporting people living and working in the Peak District. Based at the Agricultural Business Centre in Bakewell, the team are well placed to support farmers going about their business at the Livestock Markets each week. The charity works to offer farm business support and promote good physical and mental health.

## DEVON

### Dartmoor Hill Farm Project

01822 890913 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm with some out of hours support  
[www.dartmoorhillfarmproject.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorhillfarmproject.co.uk)  
[hfp@dartmoor.gov.uk](mailto:hfp@dartmoor.gov.uk)

Covering the National Park area and providing a range of services to hill farmers helping to support agricultural businesses in a variety of different ways. This includes training, advice and general support and guidance on many issues.



## **Exmoor Hill Farming Network CIC**

**01643 841455**

**www.ehfn.org.uk | katherine@ehfn.org.uk**

A farmer-led organisation, established in 2014, to improve the viability and sustainability of Exmoor farming businesses through knowledge transfer, peer-group support, training, and co-operation to safeguard upland farming, rural employment and landscape management.

## **DORSET**

### **Sherborne Deanery Rural Chaplaincy**

**07966 754110** Available 7am-11pm not a helpline

**rural.chaplaincy@btinternet.com**

Although not a helpline, Richard offers a listening ear and support for farming and rural communities across Dorset and beyond and can help signpost to other organisations. The team can often be found at Salisbury Livestock Market, supporting farming and rural businesses.

## **DURHAM**

### **Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services - UTASS**

**01833 641010** Available Mon-Fri 9am-4pm closed Wed

**07917 304685 (Emergency)**

**www.utass.org | inittogether@utass.org**

UTASS has worked with farmers across the Durham Dales for more than 25 years and provides guidance, practical support and help with complex paperwork. They deliver a raft of community-based services including offering training and support to farm businesses to help them access opportunities, financial support and focus on the future. The team want to de-jargonise essential information, signpost to other organisations and prevent problems from getting to crisis stage.



## **GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

### **Gloucestershire Farming Friends**

0845 300 6886

[www.gloucestershirefarmingfriends.wordpress.com](http://www.gloucestershirefarmingfriends.wordpress.com)

[help@gloucestershirefarmingfriends.co.uk](mailto:help@gloucestershirefarmingfriends.co.uk)

A voluntary group in Gloucestershire providing free, confidential, emotional and practical support to farmers and the rural community via the helpline, Facebook page and email.

## **HEREFORDSHIRE**

### **Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy**

07958 591646 or 07531 676832

[www.borderchaplain.org](http://www.borderchaplain.org)

Operating through the Hereford Diocese and the Shropshire and Marches Methodist Circuit, Borderlands Rural Chaplains work in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Eastern Powys. The Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy is a confidential, listening ear offering pastoral support to farmers, farming families and agricultural communities.

## **Herefordshire Rural Hub**

01432 268428 Available 5am – 10pm messaging service

[www.herefordshireruralhub.co.uk](http://www.herefordshireruralhub.co.uk)

[hub@herefordshireruralhub.co.uk](mailto:hub@herefordshireruralhub.co.uk)

A business support organisation promoting economic, environmental and social improvements in land-based and rural businesses. The Hub provides an information and support network to farming and other rural businesses, in and around Herefordshire, through newsletters, website, email, and events.

Email or call (and leave a message).

## **LANCASHIRE**

### **Lancashire Field Nurse**

07815 099748

[info@fieldnurse.org.uk](mailto:info@fieldnurse.org.uk)

Providing a health and wellbeing drop-in clinic at Clitheroe, Gisburn and Brock Auction Markets for farmers and rural workers of any age group. Can also be contacted through their Facebook page @fieldnursecare



## LINCOLNSHIRE

### Lincolnshire Rural Support Network

**0800 138 1710** Available daily 8am-8pm all year  
[www.lrsn.co.uk](http://www.lrsn.co.uk) | [info@lrsn.co.uk](mailto:info@lrsn.co.uk)

A volunteer led organisation that provides pastoral, emotional and practical support to farming and rural people during periods of anxiety, stress and problems relating to their families and businesses. One-to-one visits, helpline, drop in advice points, health screening.

## NORFOLK

### YANA

**0300 323 0400** Available 24/7 messaging service available  
[www.yanahelp.org](http://www.yanahelp.org) | [helpline@yanahelp.org](mailto:helpline@yanahelp.org)

YANA is an East Anglian charity working in Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire. YANA can help anyone worried about a member of their family, a colleague or a friend and offer an informative website; confidential helpline with access to specialist counsellors and doctors and funding for counselling.

## SHROPSHIRE

### Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy

**07958 591646** or **07531 676832**  
[www.borderchaplain.org](http://www.borderchaplain.org)

Operating through the Hereford Diocese and the Shropshire and Marches Methodist Circuit, Borderlands Rural Chaplains work in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Eastern Powys. The Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy is a confidential, listening ear offering pastoral support to farmers, farming families and agricultural communities.

### Shropshire Rural Support

**0300 123 2825** Available 24/7 9pm-9am divert to Samaritans  
[www.shropshireruralsupport.org.uk](http://www.shropshireruralsupport.org.uk)  
[ruth@shropshireruralsupport.org.uk](mailto:ruth@shropshireruralsupport.org.uk)

Shropshire Rural Support provides confidential support during periods of anxiety and stress, and with problems relating to their families and their businesses. The service is delivered by people with farming backgrounds who understand the ups and downs of farming, family farming businesses and living in the countryside.



## SOMERSET

### Exmoor Hill Farming Network CIC

01643 841455

[www.ehfn.org.uk](http://www.ehfn.org.uk) | [katherine@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:katherine@ehfn.org.uk)

A farmer-led organisation, established in 2014, to improve the viability and sustainability of Exmoor farming businesses through knowledge transfer, peer-group support, training, and co-operation to safeguard upland farming, rural employment and landscape management.

## STAFFORDSHIRE

### The Farming Life Centre

01692 810903 not a helpline

[www.thefarminglifecentre.org.uk](http://www.thefarminglifecentre.org.uk)

[info@thefarminglifecentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thefarminglifecentre.org.uk)

Supporting people living and working in the Peak District. Based at the Agricultural Business Centre in Bakewell, the team support farmers going about their business at the Livestock Markets each week. The charity works to offer farm business support and promote good physical and mental health.

## SUFFOLK

### Lightwave

07413 683368 Available 24/7

[www.light-wave.org](http://www.light-wave.org)

[graham.miles.lightwave@gmail.com](mailto:graham.miles.lightwave@gmail.com)

Reaching out and supporting farming and countryside communities in Suffolk and beyond.

## YANA

0300 323 0400 Available 24/7 messaging service available

[www.yanahelp.org](http://www.yanahelp.org)

[helpline@yanahelp.org](mailto:helpline@yanahelp.org)

YANA is a key East Anglian charity working across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire. YANA can help anyone worried about a member of their family, a colleague or a friend and offer an informative website; confidential helpline run by Samaritans-trained volunteers with access to specialist counsellors and doctors and funding for counselling.



## **WARWICKSHIRE**

### **Warwickshire Rural Hub**

**07780 159291** Available Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm

**[www.ruralhub.org.uk](http://www.ruralhub.org.uk)**

**[info@ruralhub.org.uk](mailto:info@ruralhub.org.uk)**

Established in October 2003 the Warwickshire Rural Hub now has a membership of over 1200 rural businesses. Membership is free of charge. Members receive a monthly e-news and invitations to topical events organised with partner organisations

## **YORKSHIRE**

### **The Farmer Network**

**01768 868615**

**[www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk](http://www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk)**

**[info@thefarmernetwork.co.uk](mailto:info@thefarmernetwork.co.uk)**

An independent, not-for-profit organisation providing help and support to farmers, their families and businesses across Cumbria and The Yorkshire Dales.

## **Yorkshire Agricultural Society**

**01423 541000** Available Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm

**[www.yas.co.uk/yrsn](http://www.yas.co.uk/yrsn)**

**[kated@yas.co.uk](mailto:kated@yas.co.uk)**

The Support Network brings together farming help organisations across Yorkshire focusing on farmer health and wellbeing, social isolation and women in farming.





## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

### C.A.L.L. Community Advice & Listening Line

**0800 132 737** Available 24/7  
[www.callhelpline.org.uk](http://www.callhelpline.org.uk)

C.A.L.L offers emotional support and information/literature on mental health and related matters to the people of Wales. Anyone concerned about their own mental health or that of a relative or friend can call the mental health helpline or text **81066** from their mobile phone.

### CALM - The Campaign Against Living Miserably

**0800 58 58 58** Available daily 5pm – midnight  
[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

CALM offers confidential, anonymous and free support information and signposting to anyone anywhere in the UK through their helpline.

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Adviceline (England): **0800 144 8848**  
Adviceline (Wales): **0800 702 2020**  
Available Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

A network of 316 independent charities throughout the United Kingdom that give free, confidential information and advice to assist people with money, legal, consumer and other problems.

### Cruse

**0808 808 1677**  
Available: Monday and Friday: 9.30am-5pm  
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 9.30am-8pm  
Saturday and Sunday: 10am-2pm  
[www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

Bereavement Counselling - available throughout UK and online resources. The Helpline is run by trained bereavement volunteers, who offer emotional support to anyone affected by grief. They will give you space to talk about your feelings and how you've been coping. Volunteers are non-judgemental and will not share what you've told them with anyone else, unless you are in danger.



## Gay Farmer

07837 931894 Available 24/7

[www.gayfarmer.co.uk](http://www.gayfarmer.co.uk)

[keithineson@gmail.com](mailto:keithineson@gmail.com)

Nationwide, confidential support for gay farmers and their families.

## Grassroots Suicide Prevention

[www.prevent-suicide.org.uk](http://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk)

Developers of the Staying Alive App - free to download from the App Store or Google Play, Grassroots also offers the online Suicide Prevention Hub which can help people understand more about suicide, help to prevent it in your community and find help if you need it.

## Growing Well

07903 013648

[www.growingwell.co.uk](http://www.growingwell.co.uk)

[info@growingwell.co.uk](mailto:info@growingwell.co.uk)

A farm-based mental health charity in Cumbria, providing a safe supportive working environment to nurture mental health recovery. If you're feeling depressed, anxious or finding everyday life difficult, Growing Well may be able to help with free effective support. You can call them or fill in a self-referral form on the website and you could be volunteering in the Growing Well field or kitchen within two weeks. Health professionals can refer a patient.

## Heads Together

Text SHOUT to 85258 Available 24/7

[www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org)

Shout is volunteer-run and is the UK's first 24/7 crisis text service. The service is free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. Trained volunteers will listen, and work to help you take the next steps towards feeling better.



## **MIND**

**0300 123 3393**

Available Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, except Bank Holidays

**www.mind.org.uk | info@mind.org.uk**

MIND provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They offer information on mental health problems, where to get help near you and treatment options. The Infoline provides an information and signposting service.

## **National Domestic Abuse Helpline**

**0808 2000 247**

## **Papyrus – HOPELINEUK**

**0800 068 4141** Available 9am-midnight

**www.papyrus-uk.org**

If you are concerned that a young person you know is feeling suicidal, advisers can support you to start a conversation with them about suicide and explore options of how best to support them.

## **Samaritans**

**116 123** Available 24/7

**www.samaritans.org | jo@samaritans.org**

Every 10 seconds, Samaritans responds to a call for help. The charity is available around the clock, every single day of the year, for anyone who is struggling to cope. You can call for free from any phone, email them, or visit their website to find details of your nearest branch.

## **SANE**

**0300 304 7000** Available daily 4pm-10pm

**www.sane.org.uk**

SANEline provides emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness

## **Scottish Mental Health**

**0344 800 0550** Available Mon-Fri 9am-6pm except Bank Holidays

**www.samh.org.uk | info@samh.org.uk**

Mental health support lines across Scotland – please note this is not a crisis service.



## Support In Mind Scotland

**0300 3231545** Available Tuesday to Thursday 9am-4pm  
[www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk](http://www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk)

Support in Mind Scotland seek to support and empower all those affected by mental illness, including family members, carers and supporters.

## Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

**0300 111 5065** Available 9am-9pm  
[www.uksobs.org](http://www.uksobs.org)

SOBS offers peer-to-peer support to all those over the age of 18, impacted by suicide loss at the time of their loss and in the months and years that follow. SOBS provides a safe, confidential environment in which bereaved people can share their experiences and feelings, so giving and gaining support from each other.

## YOUNG FARMERS CLUBS

### NFYFC - National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

**02476 857200**  
[www.nfyfc.org.uk](http://www.nfyfc.org.uk) | [post@nfyfc.org.uk](mailto:post@nfyfc.org.uk)

A rural youth organisation for those who have a love for agriculture and rural life. YFCs provide members with opportunities to develop life skills, work with their local communities, take part in a varied programme and provide peer support and friendship.

### SAYFC - Scottish Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

**01313 332445**  
[www.sayfc.org](http://www.sayfc.org) | [penny@sayfc.org](mailto:penny@sayfc.org)

Scotland's largest rural youth organisation providing competitions, events, training and travel. Their award-winning "Are Ewe Okay" campaign, launched in 2016, paved the way for discussions about mental health in farming.



## **Wales Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs**

01982 553502

[www.yfc.wales](http://www.yfc.wales) | [information@yfc-wales.org.uk](mailto:information@yfc-wales.org.uk)

Wales YFC is a voluntary youth organisation operating bilingually throughout rural Wales and has over 5,000 young people aged 10 - 26 years.

## **YFCU - Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster**

028 9037 0713

[www.yfcu.org](http://www.yfcu.org) | [info@yfcu.org](mailto:info@yfcu.org)

YFCU is a non-political and non-sectarian organisation open to anyone aged 12 - 30 years, no matter of his or her ethnic background, religion or profession. There is no requirement to be a farmer or come from a farming background to join – the only requirement for membership is an interest in rural life.

**The printing of this book has been made possible by all the YFCs, individuals and organisations that have raised money and awareness for the issue of mental health in farming.**

**Together we can make a difference.**

# **THANK YOU**



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**@YELLOWWELLIESUK**   



## DUCHY *of* CORNWALL

04 September 2023

Dear All

### **Duchy of Cornwall – Tenant Wellbeing and Support Service**

We recognise that we are living in challenging times. Our mental wellbeing has become more important than ever before.

I am therefore pleased to enclose details of our Tenant Wellbeing and Support Service. This is a free service that the Duchy are making available to all our residential, farm and small business customers.

The service is being provided by Life and Progress, and offers a range of help and support available 24/7 via telephone, online and there is even an app.

It is free and totally confidential. Life and Progress will not divulge any personal details to the Duchy of Cornwall.

I do hope that this service will be of use to you.

Yours

Matthew Morris FRICS FAAV

Rural Director

# Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service

Confidential information and counselling



DUCHY of CORNWALL



The right help at the right time



The service is available around-the-clock, 24/7, over the telephone and online.

The service aims to answer your questions quickly and will also refer you to the most appropriate source of support, including counselling, legal, financial, childcare and consumer experts.

Your **Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service** from Life & Progress is here to help you. A free and confidential service providing practical information, resources, and counselling to help you balance your work, family and personal life.

Available no matter when or where, anytime, any day, support is just a telephone call away. You can even find support online. There is no limit to the number of issues you can gain support on and there is no cost to use the service.



You are encouraged to contact the service as soon as an issue presents itself and before matters become more serious.

The service can offer support to help you cope successfully with life events, helping you stay happy, healthy and fully focussed on life and work.

The two main features included within your Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service are:

## Counselling and Advice

Providing you with practical information, advice and guidance on a wide range of personal, family, work and everyday living issues.

You also have access to Support in the Moment telephone counselling, and online support.

**TSWS Freephone:**  
**0330 094 5593**

**TSWS Website:**  
**www.tenantcare.co.uk**

**Username: duchy247**  
**Password: tenant365**

## MyMindPal App

MyMindPal, our mental fitness app, will help you handle life's daily challenges, as well as providing a safe place to go when things are on top of you.

MyMindPal is a user-friendly app, designed to help reduce stress and improve your emotional wellbeing.

**To log in, use your code:**  
**DOC23LPMP**



Counselling and Advice



Mental-Fitness App



Online Support



Around-the-clock support



The service can be accessed at any time simply by calling into the service on the Freephone number.

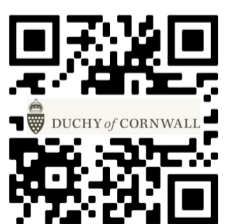
Upon speaking to a trained service representative, you will be supported and they will help you determine the best course of action to resolve your issue.

You may benefit from simply talking with the service representative, or you may wish to receive more specialist support or counselling.

Whatever your situation the service will help – and if appropriate, put you in touch with an expert who will assist you with the issues you are facing.

**Tenant Freephone:**  
**0330 094 5593**

[www.tenantcare.co.uk](http://www.tenantcare.co.uk)



SCAN ME